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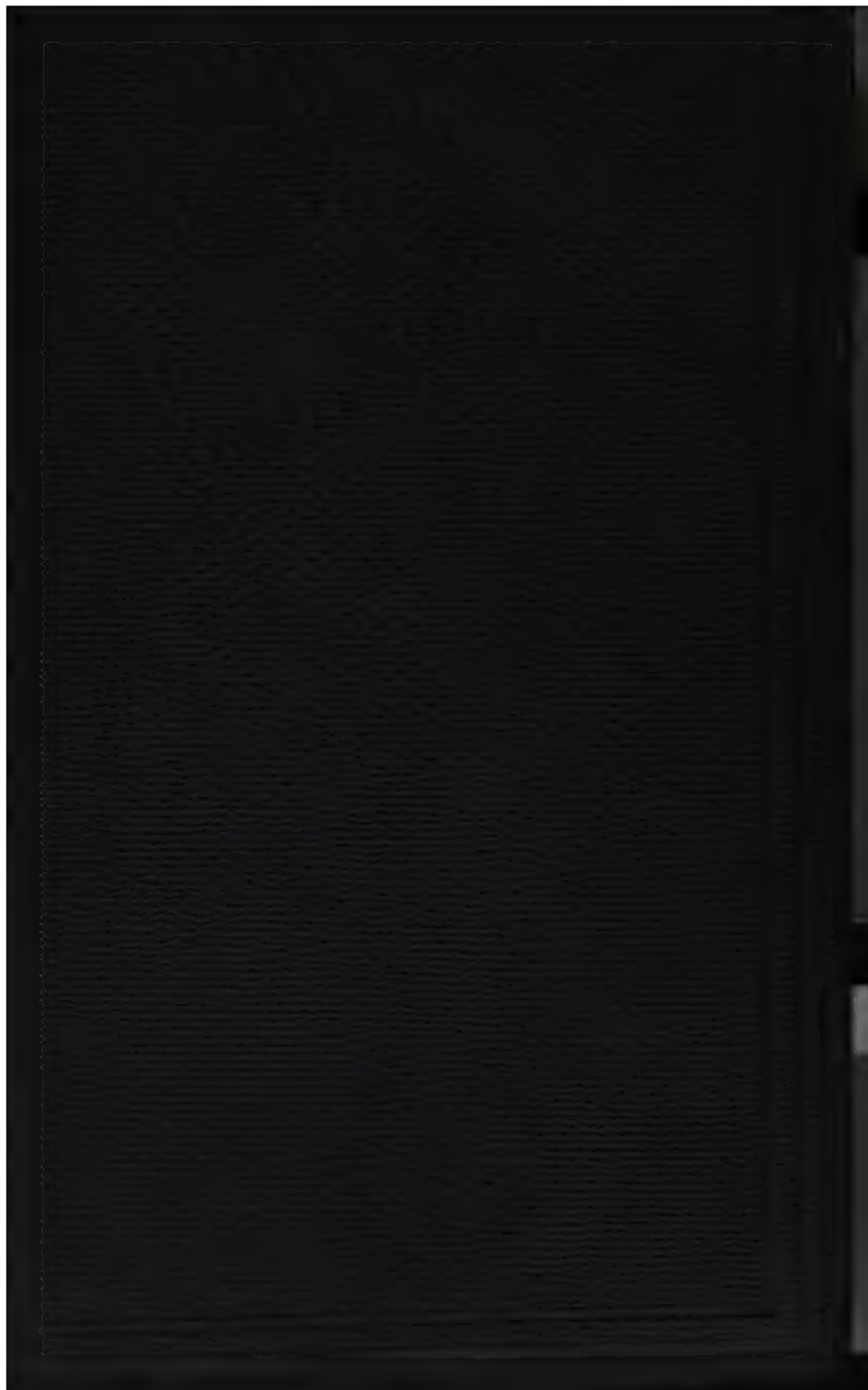
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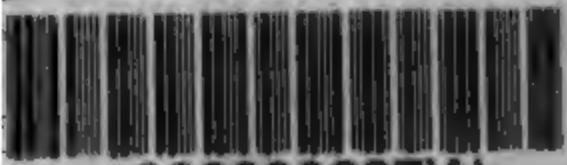
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A COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPELS.

***SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY TO ADVENT,
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS,***

WITH THE GOSPELS FOR THE OCCASIONAL SERVICES.

A COMMENTARY
ON THE
GOSPELS FOR THE SUNDAYS
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS OF THE
CHRISTIAN YEAR.

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INCUMBENT OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S, CRIPPLEGATE.

*SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY TO ADVENT,
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS,*

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THE GOSPELS FOR THE SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS OF THE CHRISTIAN YEAR.

THE SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. LUKE XIV. 1—11.¹

§ (1) [*And*] *it came to pass, as He went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched Him.*

IN the Gospel appointed for the preceding Sunday we have an instance of the power of Christ in raising the dead; in the Gospel for this Sunday we have His mercifulness and power shown in healing the body of the diseased: at the same time, as though to teach us that those things which hinder the healing of the soul, and raising the sinner from the death of sin, are harder to remove than corporeal sickness and the reanimation of a dead body, the dropsical man leaves the presence of Christ wholly freed from disease, whilst the Pharisees remain bound with the chain of their *Costor.* sins.

We have the record of seven distinct cures which were wrought by our Blessed Lord on the Sabbath day, besides

¹ "In hodiernâ Epistolâ videre facile quivis potest quam pulchre Paulus cum Christo consentiat in hodierno Evangelio. Tota Epistola eò tendit, ne quis sibi ipse capiat primum accubitus, sed unusquisque suæ vacet vocationi, et secundum illam vivat, ambulet, et agat; cogi-

tet se non totum corpus, sed membrum solùm in corpore esse, et quod non solus spiritum Dei omnem habeat, sed quod alii spiritum Dei etiam habeant. Imò non solùm spiritum, sed etiam fidem et baptismum, quinimò Deum ipsum." — *Ferus in Dom.*

many others which, we are told, were done on the same day, but of which no detailed accounts have been preserved for us. These miracles of healing are—

Mark i. 23—
25.

(1) The driving out the unclean spirit from the man in the synagogue at Capernaum.

Mark i. 29.

(2) The cure wrought on Simon's wife's mother, which took place on the same day and in the same city as the former miracle.

John v. 1—9.

(3) The healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda.

Matt. xii. 9—

(4) The restoration of the man who had a withered hand.

13.
John ix. 14.

(5) The giving sight to the man who had been born blind, which miracle was done at Jerusalem.

Luke xiii. 14.

(6) The release of the woman bowed down with a *spirit of infirmity*.

Trench.

(7) The healing of the man with the dropsy, which is the subject of the present Gospel. All these miracles were wrought on the Sabbath day; in the sight, therefore, of large bodies of people, who for one reason or another were gathered together on that day. In many of these cases we may well believe also that those who were healed were drawn to the synagogue or the temple for the worship of God, and were, therefore, in a state of faith and preparation of mind to receive the temporal blessing which Christ communicated to them.¹

Christ showed those who watched Him and sought occasion to accuse Him that they were themselves guilty of avarice, and were ready enough to break the letter of the fourth commandment if their beasts were in danger, even if they were not violating its spirit by their injunctions of fasting on that day; whilst by the parable which He afterwards spake He admonished them to humility: in the whole of His discourse reproving them in these particulars—of pride, of avarice, and of the violation of the Sabbath day, in which they were ready enough to take care of their worldly possessions, whilst they were on the watch to accuse Him for

¹ This constant recurrence of the same number *seven* may surely well teach, even if it is not expressly intended to remind us of, a specific truth. We instinctively recur to the *seven* offers of mercy to Jerusalem given in the *seven* entrances of our Blessed Lord into the holy city; to the *seven* days of God's work and rest; to the *seven* spirits around His eternal throne; and the *sevenfold* gifts of His Holy Spirit bestowed upon His faith-

ful people. This number is in Holy Scripture so constantly associated with the idea of perfection and completeness, that it seems to have some natural connexion with it. He of whom it has been specifically recorded, that He did *seven* acts of mercy on His day of rest, would, it may be, teach us that though He has rested from His work of creation, He is yet ever healing all manner of spiritual infirmity in us sinners.

doing a work of charity and love on that day.¹ He thus not only avoided the snares which they had laid for Him, but He showed their guilt in the same direction as that in which they sought to accuse Him. Peraldus.

He came to the house of *one of the chief Pharisees*, and we are told that *they watched Him*. We are not told that he who invited Him was one of those who *watched* to find some accusation against Him. The words only assert that the rest of those at table did so. Such conduct in the host would imply the utmost degree of malignity, since the laws and rights of hospitality would, in that case, have been altogether disregarded.² It does not follow, then, from the words of the Evangelist, that Christ was invited with any purpose of entrapping Him and finding a ground of accusation; but that when He was there, and a sick man stood before Him, then His enemies *watched* to see how He would avoid breaking the law and yet show mercy on the sick man. Some commentators have supposed that the man was purposely introduced, and that he presented himself before Jesus in order to ensnare Him. This, however, is not stated in the history, and is unlikely, not to say impossible. Christ healed only those who came to Him in faith, and who believed in Him: this poor man could not therefore have sought Christ from any unworthy desire of giving occasion to His enemies to accuse Him. Our Blessed Lord came, however, that He might heal this man, though He knew the malignity of those who were in the house. It is not indeed stated Hammond.
Barradius.

Trench.

The Sabbath was a feast day among the Jews, and since this man was a Pharisee he was careful to observe the traditions of the elders as to this day. These were that a man ought to prepare abundance of food and spiced liquids for the Sabbath day; that he should increase the quantity and be solicitous as to the superior quality of his food on that day; and have three meals on that day—one in the evening, one in the morning, and one at the time of the meat offering. And this rule was enjoined even on the poor man who lived by alms. —*Gill*.

² "Pleraque festa Judæi quondam hilaritate et splendidis conviviiis transfigere et condecorare solebant. Cujus rei non obscura apud scriptores vestigia extant. De Pentecoste, Tob. ii. 1, hæc legimus: "Ὅτε δὲ κατῆλθον εἰς τὸν οἶκόν

μου, καὶ ἀπεδόθη μοι Ἄννα, ἡ γύνῃ μου, καὶ Τοβίας, ὁ υἱός μου, ἐν τῇ Πεντεκοστῇ τῇ ἱορτῇ ἥ ἐστιν ἁγία ἡμέρα ἐβδομάδων, ἐγενήθη ἡ ἱστορία καλὴ μοι, καὶ ἀνέπεσα τοῦ φαγεῖν. De aliis festis, et speciatim de Sabbatho, notatu dignum est quod de Juditha narratur, Judith viii. 6: Καὶ ἐνήστευσε πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς χηρεύσεως αὐτῆς χωρὶς προσαββάτων καὶ σαββάτων, καὶ προνουμηνιῶν καὶ νουμηνιῶν, καὶ ἱορτῶν καὶ χαρμοσυνῶν οἴκου Ἰσραήλ. Quinimo adeo sacer diebus Sabbathi epulandi mos Judæis habitus fuit, ut Rabbini canone definiverint, 'Eum qui in Sabbatho tria prandia diligenter observaverit, liberatum iri à tribus pœnis, à doloribus Messiae, à judicio Gehennæ, et à bello Gog et Magog.'"
—*Keuchner, Annotata in omnes Nov. Test. libros.*

that the poor man asked in words to be cured. His needs were a prayer to Christ. This is consistent with all our Lord's actions whilst on earth, and with His loving-kindness now.¹ Though the nation of the Jews was hardened against His claims, yet He was ever proffering to these people the bread of life, and ever instructing them by His words and works. He came, indeed, specially to seek and to save those who were lost. He, therefore, came to those who were self-blinded, and who, like these Pharisees, were bent on rejecting Him, and who sought to ensnare Him and to throw suspicion upon Him because of His deeds of mercy. As, however, this conduct of the rulers of the Jews did not then hinder Him from healing those who were diseased, so does He still continue to heap His mercies and benefits upon the unthankful and the evil, as well as upon those who will thankfully receive the blessings which He gives.

Cyril.

Lyserus.

Abelly.

Luke xv. 2.

Wicellius.

Rev. iii. 20.

On another occasion we read that the ever watchful enemies of Christ accused Him, saying, *This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.* Here we find Him seated at the table of *one of the chief Pharisees* and eating bread. He comes to all sinners, passing by none, rejecting none, making no distinctions amongst those who are alike in one particular, that they need His presence and His healing. He was whilst on earth, as now, ever standing ready to have mercy; and thus He says elsewhere, *If any man—be he publican or Pharisee—if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.*

In the fact of Christ's going into the company of these Pharisees and eating bread,² we are taught three lessons—

(1) That He who came in all things to do His Father's will, and to accomplish the work which He had Himself

¹ "Those merciful and miraculous cures which Christ wrought upon the Sabbath, He wrought them all unsought to, offered His help unasked: as to the man at Bethesda, Wilt thou be made whole? So to the woman bowed down by Satan, Woman, thou art loosed from infirmity, when she never thought of it. So the man with the withered hand, Stretch forth thine hand, and it was cured, when he never expected it. The man born blind: all these were cured in a gracious, preventing way."—*Brownrigg's Sermons.*

² "Manducari panem in Scriptura, quamvis de pane tantum fiat mentio, tamen de omni cibo intellige. Sic in

primo libro Regum habetur, quod mulier illa pythonissa ad panem invitavit Saulem et dedit ei vitulum pascualem. Et in quarto Regum etiam legimus, quod coram Assyriis jussit Eliseus ponere panem apposita autem est coram eis ciborum maxima multitudo. Ionathas etiam, qui favum mellis comedit, præceptum patris fregit, qui dixerat, *Maledictus qui comederit panem usque ad vesperam.* Ubi vides nomine panis intelligi etiam favum mellis et omnem cibum nam apud Hebræos panis appellatur *lechem*, à verbo *lacham*, quod significat comedere; unde quicquid comeditur panis appellatur."—*Stella.*

undertaken, went to the banquet of men, not so much to partake of the food which His creatures set before Him, as that He—the bread of God which cometh down from heaven—might refresh His hearers with the spiritual food of His doctrine and actions. John vi. 33.
Royard.

(2) By His participation in the simple matters of man's daily life He would assure us of His interest and sympathy in our daily needs. Titus Bost.

(3) He would set us an example of forbearance and kindness to our enemies, even though they may be full of malice towards us. Boys.

In that our Blessed Lord came to the house of one of His own creatures, He gave a memorable instance of His condescension and an example of that humility which He afterwards commended. In that He went to the house of a Pharisee, and sat with them who were ever on the watch to entrap Him and to find some grounds of accusation against Him, He showed the boundlessness of His love and the greatness of His patience towards sinners, even to those who reject His offers of mercy. In that He ate bread, He showed the reality of that humanity which He had associated with the Divine nature in His own person, and the need to which He had submitted in being made like us in all things. In the whole course of His actions Christ at this time exhibited the depth of that loving-kindness which He has for man, and proved to us that, though He was rich in the eternal glory of the Godhead, yet for our sakes He had really become poor, and had condescended to the necessities of man, in order that by His poverty He might enrich us. Heb. ii. 17.

2 Cor. viii. 9.
Bonaventura.
Konigsteyn.

These Pharisees sought occasion to destroy the credit of our Blessed Lord with the people, by casting doubts upon His claim to be the Messiah. Since it had been foretold as one of the characteristics of the Messiah, that He should be free from sin, *neither* should there be *any deceit in His mouth*, they continually sought means of showing that Christ was a sinner, and tried to find means of accusing Him by perverting His words and misrepresenting His actions. At this time they endeavoured to do so by accusing Him of breaking the law concerning the Sabbath: when this failed, and they were put to silence, we find them trying to attain the same end by accusing Him of receiving sinners and of eating with the publican Zaccheus.¹ On this occasion the dilemma to which they thought to reduce Him was this— Isa. liii. 9.

Luke xv. 2.
Stella.

¹ "Considérez que les Pharisiens observaient particulièrement les actions de Jésus-Christ lorsqu'il était à table, à cause que c'est là où ordi-

nairement on se relâche, et où on se licencie plus facilement qu'en un autre temps à faire ou dire quelque chose avec moins de retenue. Veillez

(1) If He forbore to heal the man, He would show that He feared the people, and would sanction the gloss which the Pharisees had put upon the command to observe the Sabbath, whilst He would make the multitude doubt either of His power to heal sickness or of His love to those who were afflicted.

Hofmeister.

(2) If He did heal the poor man who stood before Him, He would be open to the charge of disregarding the law of Moses and of breaking the Sabbath. These men, blinded by their malice, forgot that the Sabbath was grossly profaned by the malicious and wicked thoughts of their hearts.

Stanhope.

Bengel.

The house of that *one of the chief Pharisees* into which our Blessed Lord entered is a type of the synagogue and of the whole Jewish nation, to which Christ had come. In place of listening to the Messiah and obeying His words, they carped at His teaching and watched Him with eyes full of malice and envy;¹ so that whilst these men, in their blindness, were shut out of His kingdom, those who knew themselves to be sinners and confessed their wickedness and came to Him for deliverance from sin—the *publicans and the harlots*—entered in and partook of the blessings which He purchased for them. Let us, from what befell them, remember that watching for Christ with malicious intentions only hardens our heart and blinds our spiritual perception. Those who go to God's Word to seek contradictory statements, and to find occasion for defaming the truth, reap the reward of their evil intentions and are confirmed in their wickedness.

Matt. xxi. 31.

Auselm.

Bonaventura.

Matt. vii. 7.

They *seek*, and they do *find*.

Christ came to the house of this Pharisee *to eat bread*,—not that He, who was Himself the Creator of all that ministers to man's necessities, needed to receive food from man, but He came in order to give His host spiritual blessings. In thus doing He leaves behind His example, that those who minister to the spiritual necessities of His people should receive of their carnal things, for according to His own word *the labourer is worthy of his hire*; or as St. Paul has given

Luke x. 7.
H. ymo.

donc sur vous-même, sur vos actions et sur vos paroles, quand vous vous trouvez à table en la compagnie des autres, et particulièrement de ceux qui ne témoignent pas beaucoup d'inclination à la piété: souvenez-vous alors de l'avertissement du saint Apôtre, qui dit que les vrais enfans de Dieu se doivent considérer en ce monde comme étant *au milieu d'une nation perverse et corrompue, et qu'ils*

doivent paraître comme des lumières, éclairans les autres par leur modestie et par leur bon exemple."—Abelly.

¹ "Salvator tripliciter confundit observationem eorum: scilicet per potentiam, hydropicum miraculosè curando; per sapientiam, quæstionem eis proponendo cui respondere non audent; per bonitatem, beneficium instructionis suis insidiatoribus impendendo."—Peraldus, *Hom. super Evan.*

the same precept, *Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.* 1 Cor. ix. 14.

(2) *And, behold, there was a certain man before Him which had the dropsy.*¹ Matt. xii. 10.

All times are times of mercy to Christ, whether He is on a journey, as when He raised the widow's son, or here whilst He is sitting at the table eating bread. He is ready to hear the suppliant and to heal at all times. Of Him it cannot be said, *He is pursuing, or He is in a journey, or peradventure He sleepeth, and must be awaked.* He neither slumbers nor sleeps. His ears are open at all times and to all sinners.² Ph. Diez. 1 Kings xix. 27.

Though this man stood in the presence of all who sat at meat with Christ, yet he is spoken of as being *before Him* alone. He regarded only our Blessed Lord, as the source of that healing which he desired; and though many were in the presence of the Saviour, yet this poor man was beheld by Him who alone can heal the wounds of sin, and who regards every sinner separately. Sylveira.

The disease, indeed, with which this man was afflicted is a striking type of sin in general. The sinner who gives way to the lusts of the body or of the mind is like the man tormented with the dropsy, troubled with thirst, and yet unsatisfied with all that he can take to assuage thirst.³ Such a man even increases the strength of those sinful habits which holds him in bondage, by the efforts he makes to rid himself of the painful reproaches of conscience. But though dropsy is a type of sin in general, it especially resembles— Jans. Gand.

(1) The sin of avarice, which is not cured by all that a man can obtain in this life, but is increased with every fresh gain. The money over which the avaricious man spends and wastes his life may fill his coffers, but it is wholly unable to fill his heart.⁴

¹ ὑδρωπικός—a word only used by St. Luke, who is the only Evangelist who records this miracle. The expression used by him is a strictly technical one, and in this and the record of the miracle we have one of the evidences of his professional calling, *Luke the beloved physician* [Col. iv. 14].

² “Erga hunc Dominum nulla hora est extra horam: nec tempus, extra tempus: nec locus ubi non sit locus nec occasio ubi non sit ad postulandum occasio et ut ab illo maxima dona ac beneficia obtineantur.”—Ph. Diez.

³ Thus the heathen poet:—
“Crescit indulgens sibi dirus hydrops,
Nec sitim pellit, nisi causa morbi
Fugerit venis, et aquosus albo
Corpore languor.”

Hor. Carm. lib. ii. 2, 13—16.

⁴ “Mellifluus S. Bernardus docet avaritiam esse speciem hydropisis: sicut hydropicus . . . ita avarus. [Ser. xliv. ad Soror.] Egregia sanè cogitatio! Quia sicut de hydropico cantavit Ovidius: *Quò plus sunt potæ plus sitiuntur aquæ.* [Ovid, Fasti i. 211.] Ita avarus inexplebili pecuniarum cu-

Royard.

(2) It is typical of the sin of sensuality—the appetite for which is whetted by every act of indulgence, and is the further from being satisfied the more it is indulged.

Corn. & Lap.

(3) It is an image of ambition and of the love of worldly greatness, the striving for pre-eminence; and also of the disappointment which attends those who obtain their desires in this respect.¹ This latter sin and disease of the mind is reproved by the parable of our Blessed Lord spoken immediately after this miracle.

Cyril.
Euthymius.

Stella.

Though this poor man stood before Christ with longing desire to be cured, and though he had faith in His power to heal him—for without this the Saviour wrought no miracle—yet either because it was the Sabbath, and he knew not whether Christ would heal him on that day, or because he feared the Pharisees, he spake no word of entreaty for healing. His need alone, and his humility, pleaded for him and fitted him to receive mercy from the hand of the Saviour.

When we, like this man, come before Christ, He hears all our prayers, He sees all our wants, and He heals us of all our infirmities.²

Matt. xii. 10.
Luke xiii. 14.

(3) *And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day?*

Whitby.

Ps. xlv 21.

Abelly.

Our Blessed Lord answered not the words but the thoughts of *the lawyers and Pharisees*,³ replying to some inward conception or reasoning of their hearts, or, it may be, to some actions expressive of their maliciousness. In so doing He showed Himself to be God, who *knoweth the secrets of the heart*, and prepared them for the manifestation of His Divine power in healing the sick man. He asked them this ques-

piditate cruciatur. Id ipsum testatur S. Bernardinus Senensis his verbis: *Est avarus propriè, qui divitiis non satiatur.* [Serm. xxii. in extraor. c. 14, in init.] Avarus nunquam suis desideriis satisfactum esse putat, nunquam his fœcibus terrenis satiari potest, quamvis illis abundet et affluat. *Repleta est terra argento et auro*, ait Isaias [ii. 7]. Non dicit Propheta quod homines sint pleni, sed *terra*. Terra quidem repleta est, non autem homines. Neque mirum; licet enim quispiam omnes mundi thesauros in sua potestate habeat, semper tamen magis, magisque sitiet turbidas ar-

gentei fluminis undas."—*Joannes d Jesu, in Quadrages. Conciones.*

¹ "*Eccò hydropicus.* Cujus humor libidinem, tumor superbiam, sitis avaritiam, designat. Hæc tria sunt ostia ad infernum."—*Coppenstein.*

² "Omne nostrum bonum in hoc consistit, ut nos coram Deo constituamus, quoniam Ipse est qui sanat omnes infirmitates nostras."—*Stella.*

³ "Quoniam peculiari ratione per hydropicum significatur avarus aut superbus, rectè ante Phariseos hydropicus curatur, ut per alterius ægritudinem corporis in aliis exprimatur languor cordis et mentis."—*Jansen Gandavensis.*

tion, as He so often did at other times, not that He desired information, but that He might compel them to reflect upon the inconsistency of their conduct in accusing Him, and that He might draw from them, at least, an answer in their own soul which should show them their error. Queesel.

In previous miracles, such as when our Saviour cured the man who had a withered hand, when the Pharisees objected that, by healing on the Sabbath day, He had broken the law, He argued with them—

(1) That the bare letter of the law might be broken for an object of mercy and charity without violating the spirit of the commandment: and He instanced the case of David, who took of the shewbread, which was reserved for the use of the priests alone, and gave it to the company with him; so that if the Pharisees condemned Christ merely because the letter of the law had been broken by the act of healing which He had performed, they would at the same time be condemning David, and Ahimelech the priest, who gave to him the shewbread. 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6.

(2) That a higher law, and one of greater authority than any glosses of the schools—that by which the great public act of worship was prescribed for the whole nation, the sacrifice to be offered on the Sabbath in the Temple service—could not be performed without a violation of what they held to be the law of the Sabbath; and that whilst, for so doing, the priests were *blameless*, Christ could not properly be charged with a breach of the same law in doing these acts of mercy.¹ Matt. xii 5. Trench.

(3) Again, elsewhere He shows that even they who complained of what He did yet had their own cattle led to be watered, and supplied with food, and that all such acts of mercy towards the beasts of the field were confessedly lawful.

(4) He tells them that those who were blaming Him for healing this man of his infirmity were yet ready enough, merely for the preservation of their property, to do servile work on the Sabbath day; and thus they stood self-condemned when they declared that His miracle of mercy was an act forbidden by even the letter of the law.²

¹ “Vult Dominus his verbis duo docere de Sabbati religione: unum, quod legem interdum legi præferri licet, nihil prohibente, quod ejusdem, latoris sunt; alterum, quod Dominus non simpliciter omne opus in Sabbato fieri prohibuerit. Certè Sabbatum cedit circumcisioni, et nemo sine opere circumcidi potest. . . . Sic Sabbatum

servandum fuerat, ut otia remur à malitia et vacaremus operibus pietatis et charitatis: hoc qui non facit, frustra sibi de Sabbati observatione placet.”—*Hofmeister*.

² “Omne opus quo Dei solius gloria requiritur licet in Sabbato.”—*Paulus de Palacio*.

(4) *And they held their peace. And He took him, and healed him, and let him go.*

Haymo.

Snoarez.

Luke xvi. 14.

Christ *healed* this man of his dropsy in the presence of *the lawyers and Pharisees*, that through this healing of the body of the sick man He might heal the souls of those who sat at meat with Him. For this miracle itself had reference to the corporeal as well as the spiritual healing, since what dropsy was to the body of this poor man, that avarice and pride were to the souls of those who *watched* to find occasion to accuse Him : and as His power over the bodily disease was shown, so was this a means to enable them to acknowledge His power over the spiritual diseases—the sins of mankind; and yet, though this sudden miracle should have led them in whose sight it was wrought to acknowledge the power of Christ, we find the man *which had the dropsy* departing healed, whilst these *lawyers and Pharisees* were but hardened, if not in their unbelief, yet in their determination to reject Christ ; so that we read soon after that *the Pharisees . . . heard all these things : and they derided Him.*

We are often told of this circumstance with reference to our Blessed Lord when healing the bodies of men, that He laid His hands upon them, that *He took* hold of them in healing them. He teaches us by this action—

Abelly.

(1) That He does not shrink from, nor despise, any one, however foul and loathsome he may be through his sins.

Maldonatus.

(2) He shows us thereby that not only His Divine but also His human nature—the body of flesh which He had taken to Himself—possessed healing virtue; that His humanity was pervaded with almighty and healing power.

Cyril.

Christ saw the misery of this sufferer, and, touched with compassion at the sight, answered the silent prayer of his heart, and healed him.¹ Thus did the Saviour deal with the whole race of man, and thus does He deal with the sinner now. He drew nigh to the world at first, as He is ever near to the sinner now, because He has compassion upon man's infirmities, and is ready to heal. With reference to the whole race of man He acted as He did to the man whom He healed of the dropsy.

¹ “ Quid hic docet Christus? Primò misericordiam exhibere, videt enim Dominus ante se hydropicum, et statim ejus miseretur ac sanat illum. Non expectat vocem se precantis, non differt miserum ad finem convivii; ultrò, motu proprio ante discubitus sanat. Hunc igitur in modum et tu,

mi Christiane, cùm vides coram te egentem, noli multas expectare preces, noli differre opem, sed continuò juva. *Ne dicas*, inquit Sapiens, Prov. iii. 28, *amico tuo : Vade et revertere et cras dabo tibi, cùm statim possis dare.* Ne videlicet elabatur tibi è manibus occasio lucrandi cœlum.”—*Matt. Faber.*

(1) He took hold of mankind in its state of sinfulness by joining Himself to our flesh through the act of His incarnation, and infused grace into the nature of man by means of that incarnation.

(2) He redeemed the whole family of mankind from slavery to Satan by His meritorious sufferings and death.

(3) He gave to the race of man the Holy Ghost, to sanctify us in our daily life.

He deals, again, thus with each sinner—

(1) He lays His hand upon him when by any means He moves him to repentance for sin.

(2) He strengthens him, and co-operates with the penitent in his strivings after holiness.

(3) He grants him His Spirit, that he may persevere in the walk of holiness. Bonaventura.

But in this miracle we have not only a picture of God's mercy to mankind; we have also an example for our imitation. If we would be healed of our sin, we also must—

(1) Stand before Christ, having come to Him with faith and full confidence in His power and willingness to heal us of all our sins.

(2) We must come on the Sabbath—resting, that is, from our own works, approaching His throne of mercy at rest from the passionate pursuits of earth, and casting aside all strivings and desires after past sin.

(3) When we so come to Christ, we may be confident that He will lay His hand upon us, and release us from our sins, and bid us go away in peace. Salmeron.

Our Blessed Lord, when He had healed this man, is said to *let him go*, requiring from him no service in compensation for His mercy.¹ Thus, by His own example, He confirms the command which He had given His Apostles, *Freely ye have received, freely give*. His gifts are ever the result of His love to us, and are bestowed *without money and without price*. Acting in this spirit, Elisha refused to receive aught from the hand of Naaman, in reward for the healing which, by his ministry, God had given to the leper, lest it should seem that the bounties of God could be obtained for money, or be purchased by any acts of man's service. Matt. x. 8.
Isa. lv. 1.
2 Kings v. 15, 16.
Boyard.

In going to the house of the Pharisee, and sitting at meat with those who were watching an opportunity to accuse Him of breaking the law of Moses, and yet working the miracle and healing the poor man, Christ teaches us that we are not to neglect doing good to others lest our good should be evil

¹ "Dimisit eum corporaliter abire sanatum, ut se transferret ad salutem animarum. Unde supra, ad illum dæmoniacum quem sanaverat, dixit, *Redi in domum tuam, et narra quanta tibi fecit Deus.*"—Bonaventura.

spoken of, and malicious men should seek to injure us: we are to do His will and to show mercy to others, content to leave the event in His hand.

Topiarius.

Let us remark, that our Blessed Lord did this, as He did so many other of His miracles, not only in the sight of a multitude, but in the presence of His malicious enemies, who were even then watching to find an accusation against Him. In this we may see the reality of His miracles. The malice of the watchful foes of Christ would prevent their being imposed upon by that which was not manifestly and without all contradiction a work of Divine power.

Luzerne.

(5) *And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass¹ or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day?*

Exod. xxiii.
5.
Deut. xxi. 4.
Luke xiii. 15.

Which of you who are now watching to accuse Me of breaking the Sabbath, which of you who are ready to censure Me, but would be willing enough to break the letter of the same law for the sake of your property, even if it be only one ass or one ox?

Inim. ab
Incar.

They were ready to break the letter of the law by drawing out of a pit the beast which had fallen into it. They were equally ready to accuse Christ, who had come to pull out of the pit which has no water the souls of those who had fallen into the snare of the devil and were immersed in the mire and pollution of their sins.²

Haymo.

¹ Several uncial manuscripts read *υἱὸς ἢ βοῦς*, which is the reading of the Coptic version, followed by S. Clemens of Alexandria, Kuinoel, Trench, Wordsworth. Alford adopts this reading in preference to that of the Vulgate and of the Textus receptus. If this is the true reading, our Blessed Lord's words would mean, If a son, or even an ox, should fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, ye would release them; how much more should I heal My son and the creature of My hand, who has fallen into a worse calamity. Olshausen however remarks, "The connexion is most in favour of *δύος*. The whole passage contains a conclusion drawn *à minori ad majus*, and with this it is obvious *υἱὸς* does not agree." Stier also maintains the genuineness of the reading which is found in almost all

versions of the passage, and observes, "The reading, *υἱὸς*, which Reltig defends, and which, if genuine, would require *ἢ βοῦς* to be regarded as a spurious and unapt addition, is, in itself, despite all critical authority, so inappropriate, that we cannot admit it: we cannot suppose that Jesus would require it of these heartless Pharisees without any qualification, that they should treat every stranger to them with the same love which they would feel towards their own children!"—*Stier's Words of the Lord Jesus* (English Translation, vol. iv. pp. 68, 69).

² "Bos jugum trahit; et per bovem designatur populus Judaicus, cujus cervicem jugum legis attraxit. Asinus lascivum et immundum est animal, et onus portat; et signat populum gentilem, qui immundus fuit—id est, origi-

However rigid these Pharisees might be in their observances of the traditionary interpretations of the law of Moses, yet this was forgotten when their property was in danger of destruction.¹ And this care for the letter of the commandments, and for the mere outward and ritual observances of the law, did not prevent their being indifferent to all its spiritual requirements. They regarded the body, and were scrupulous in the rigid performance of bodily worship, but it was to the neglect of the soul and of spiritual obedience. They could bestow thought upon the necessities of their cattle which had *fallen into a pit*,² but they were indifferent to the wants of their brethren. Barradius.

By His conduct on this occasion, and by His treatment of the man afflicted with the dropsy, as well as of these malicious Pharisees, our Blessed Lord manifested His wisdom, His power, and His goodness. His wisdom was evidenced by His answering the thought of men's hearts; His power was shown in His healing the sickness of the man who stood before Him; His goodness was marked, not only by His miracle of mercy on the body of this man, but also in His forbearance towards those who were watching to accuse Him of sin in breaking the law. Alvernus.

(6) *And they could not answer Him again to these things.*

The evidence of Divine power, and the truth and wisdom of Christ's words, silenced the malice of these Pharisees, though it did not cause them to cease from their efforts to entrap the Saviour. They were unable to *answer Him*, though they continued to lay snares against Him, until at length they were permitted to crucify Him.³ In this let the ministers Ecumenius.

nali peccato et actuali pollutus. . . . Veniens Dominus Jesus in mundum per incarnationis mysterium omnes, et Judæos et gentiles, vinculis Satanae invenit astrictos et in puteo concupiscentiae—i. e. carnalibus desideriis invenit mersos. Nulla distantia inter Judæos et gentiles; omnes enim peccaverunt, et egent gloria Dei—i. e. misericordia Dei [Rom. iii. 23].”—Haymo.

¹ “Cadit asinus, et est qui sublevet, perit anima et non est qui recogitet.”—S. Bernard.

² “Φρίαρ id. qd. βόθρυος, Matt. xii. 11, Heb. חב, Gen. xxxvii. 22, Exod. xxi. 33, 1 Sam. xix. 22, 2 Sam. iii. 26. De cisternis in Palæstinæ et

Arabiae regionibus frequenter obviis, in quibus aqua pluvialis colligitur, quæ inferius latæ, superne autem angustæ sunt: vid. Faber, *Archæolog. d. Hebr.* p. 122, seqq.; Warnekros, *Hebr. Alterth.*, p. 57, seq.”—Kuinoel.

³ “Non poterant ad hæc respondere illi — splendidissima namque luce veritatis evanescere videbant omnes tenebras falsitatis: sic enim eos convincit, ut eosdem etiam avaritiæ condemnent; ostendens eos violare Sabbatum in operibus cupiditatis qui Eum violare arguunt in operibus charitatis, legem male interpretantes. Non enim in Sabbato a bonis sed malis operibus feriandum.”—Konigsteyn.

of Christ learn a lesson of patience. If the spotless and perfect life of Christ, and the Divine wisdom which fell from His lips, failed to move the hearts of these sinners, let not His ministers wonder and be disappointed if their labours and example and teaching, mingled as all these must be with so much error and imperfection, appear to be disregarded, and even lost, upon an ungodly world. If, after all their care and toil, much of what they do seems lost and disregarded, they are in this but like their Lord, and are following in His footsteps.

Brentius.

Prov. xxv. 6,
7.

(7) *And He put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when He marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them, (8) When thou art bidden¹ of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; (9) and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.²*

Hofmeister.

Our Divine Master is here pointing out the danger, not of sitting down in the chief room and in the chief place at a feast, but of choosing this post and seeking this height. And there seems in these words so striking an application to the condition of the Jews, that the man seeking and placing himself *in the highest room* became a parable to the whole nation. They, proud of their descent from Abraham, and trusting in the possession of the law of Moses, whilst they rejected Him by whom they were called and *bidden* to the marriage, were through that pride blinded to their real state, were compelled *to take the lowest room*, and to give place to the Gentiles, whom they despised.

Soarez.

Jansen Yp.

After our Blessed Lord had healed the bodily sickness of the man before Him, He proceeds to point out the means of cure for men's spiritual dropsy, their insatiable ambition, and striving for the chief places in power and in the estimation of their fellow-men. His miracle was in itself an image of spiritual truth, and now by a parable He completes the lesson which His miracle teaches.

Our Blessed Lord is here speaking *a parable*. He is not concerned merely with the Sabbath-day feast which was probably then taking place, but He leads us on and gives us rules for our guidance with reference to that spiritual

¹ “Κλήθης à Domino per predicatorum Suos—misit servos suos vocare [Matt. xxii. 3].”—Gorranus.

² “Quasi dejectus in animo tuo, aut ejectus de officio tuo, aut rejectus post mortem in inferno.”—Gorranus.

feast to which He is ever inviting us, especially to that *wedding* in which our souls are knit to Him:¹ for daily is He recalling souls which have wandered from Him, in order that they may be again united to Him. This exhortation, therefore, is made to every one of us, since all are called to the closest union with Christ, the Bridegroom of the Church and the Head of the several members of that Church, *which is His body*.

Bruno
Asten.Ludolph.
Ephes. i. 22,
23.

Holy Scripture, indeed, continually represents this union of Christ with the members of His body under the figure of a wedding; or, rather, every earthly marriage is a figure and parable of those heavenly nuptials by which the soul of the faithful one is united to the Saviour. Under this image does our Blessed Lord answer the cavil of the Pharisees: *Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the Bridegroom is with them? as long as they have the Bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.* Again, the work of God's Church on earth is spoken of in the same way. *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding. So also the perfect unity of the soul with God after this life is imaged in the same way. The marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. . . . And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.* This marriage God made when He united the Divine nature in indissoluble union with the human at the incarnation of the Son, and in the Person of the One God-Man Christ Jesus; and all union of the soul of the individual to God is the result and the blessed fruit of this union of God with man.

Mark ii. 18—
20.Matt. xxi. 2,
3.Rev. xix. 7,
9.

Royard.

(10) *But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that² when he that bade thee*

¹ It would seem doubtful whether the feast in the house of the Pharisee were a wedding feast, since it was contrary to the traditions of the elders to marry on the Sabbath. Before the time of Ezra a marriage on this day was lawful; from that time, however, it was forbidden [Maimonides, Hilchot Ishot, cap. x. §§ 14, 15]. Afterwards it would seem that this rule was disre-

garded. In the time of our Blessed Lord, however, the traditions of the elders in this respect would probably be observed.

² "Iva—*Ut cum venerit.* Conjunctio ut videtur debere accipi consecutivè. Non enim docere voluit Dominus eo fine ultimum locum diligendum, sed quod consecuturum sit." — *Jansen Gandavensis.*

cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher :¹ then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

Prov xxv. 6,

When thou art bidden to the wedding, and art called to the faith in Christ, go and sit down in the lowest room ; humble thyself in all things, and thou shalt find grace and favour in the sight of God, who will exalt thee to no mere earthly height, but to that which is spiritual and heavenly.

Haymo.

It is unbelief in Christ, and forgetfulness of His presence, which permits men to be ambitious, and to strive with such zeal for earthly advancement. If men practically remembered that Christ, the King of kings, regards with greater favour and approval those who are free from the spirit of ambition, and who are lowly in their own eyes, they would shrink from the foolish pursuits of worldly honour and station.

Barradius.

He who bids the soul to this marriage feast is Christ, the Bridegroom. He comes to us with this word of confidence — *Friend* ; and to those whom He finds walking in humility He addresses this call to *go up higher*. To every one who is so walking He says, *Friend*, since they are the friends of God, especially beloved by Him, who whilst on earth were of a *lowly* spirit ;² and He calls such to a *higher* life—

Matt. xi. 29.
Gorranus.

(1) To greater holiness, to advance in their Christian calling whilst on earth ; and this He does by spiritual inspiration, and by drawing their hearts upwards to Himself. This He is doing daily, lifting it up from its sinfulness and weakness, and giving to the soul strength to lead that *higher* life to which He calls each one of us.

Bede.

Bonaventura.

(2) He calls us by death to a *higher* position, calling us away from earth and placing us in His kingdom of glory.

The marriage feast, again, is a type of that spiritual feast of Christ's body and blood, which is in itself an image of the joys which await us in heaven, and for which it prepares us. To this feast Christ invites all the faithful, since it is the marriage feast of Himself and of His own virgin spouse, the Church. The table is the altar of God ; the food, the Lamb

¹ “Προσανάβηθι ἀνώτερον. — Ex Salamone xxv. 7, ubi Græce sic est : Κρείσσον γάρ σοι τὸ ῥηθῆναι, Ἀναβαίνει, ἢ ταπεινῶσαι σε ἐν προσώπῳ δυνάστου. Exstat parabola ejusdem sensus in libro Judaico cui titulus Electuarium Gemmarum.” — *Grotius*.

² “In hodierna parabola observo quòd ascendens ad superiorem locum

vocetur *amicus*, non verò qui descendit. Qui modesti et inanis gloriæ osores sunt, hi amici sunt omnium, concitant animos ad benevolentiam, sicut vicissim ambitiosi, cùm se omnibus anteponunt exosi sunt singulis. *Amicus* vocatur qui aulicum sese præstiterat novissimum locum capessendo.” — *Hartung*.

slain for the whole household of God ; the drink there offered, the precious blood of His dear Son. Whoever approaches with high thoughts of his own worthiness, and relying upon his own merits, comes like the proud man whom the Lord tells to take a lower seat.¹ He who regards himself, on the other hand, as wholly unworthy to come to that heavenly feast, will seek to take the lowest seat there, and shall, because he is of a lowly spirit, hear the voice of Christ inviting him to follow Him to higher joys—*Friend, go up higher.* Faber Stap.

When thou, penitent one, art called from thy sins, and when Christ is speaking peace to thy soul, and thou art called to union with Him, remember that humility is the foundation of all Christian perfection, and the first requisite in those who seek to be Christ's disciples, and would advance in His knowledge, and be worthy of a higher place in His kingdom of glory. Think thyself, therefore, to be least and lowliest of all ; aim not after *high things* on earth, but *con-* Hugo de S.
Charo.
descend to them that are of low estate.

(11) *For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* Joh xlii. 29.
Ps. xviii. 27.
Prov. xv. 33 ;
xviii. 12 ;
xxix. 23.
Matt. xxiii.
12.
Luke xviii.
14.
James iv. 6.
1 Pet. v. 5.

This lesson of humility is frequently inculcated by our Blessed Lord in these or similar words ; but, beyond all words, it is a lesson enforced by His own example, *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God : but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name : that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Phil. ii. 6—
11.

Though there may be danger in high station naturally, yet

¹ "Nuptias hic intelligimus convivium nuptiale, scilicet Christi et Ecclesie. Et est duplex convivium, scilicet prandium et cœna. Prandium celebratur in fide: cœna in manifesta Dei visione. Prandium commune est non solum electis, sed etiam multis reprobis. Cœna vero solum est electorum; unde, *Beati qui ad cœnam*

nuptiarum Agni vocati sunt [Apoc. xix. 9]. Inter invitatos vero ad prandium multi confusionem patiuntur ex causis diversis: scilicet alii propter defectum puritatis conscientie; alii propter defectum pietatis; alii propter defectum charitatis; alii propter defectum humilitatis."—*Peraldus.*

let us note Christ does not say that whosoever is exalted *shall be abased*, but *whosoever exalteth himself*.¹ Many are exalted without any seeking on their own part, but are raised to eminence from their fitness for high station: of these our Blessed Lord is not speaking. He, however, who, from the promptings of worldly ambition, strives for station, and desires to place himself in a post of honour, will, even in earthly things, oftentimes reap that harvest which is here threatened—*he shall be abased*; and in matters of the soul will always miss that for which he is unprepared and unfitted through his ambition and self-confidence. The world really abases by exalting its children. God raises His sons by humbling them, and exalts those who follow His will and humble themselves.² The road to the honours of heaven passes at all times through the gate of humility.³ But let us remember that the promise, *he shall be exalted*, is made to one who *humbleth himself* and is lowly in his own estimation, not to him who by his speech, his look, his clothing, and by other mere outward manifestations, endeavours to appear lowly in the sight of his fellow-men. The promise is only to him who is really humble in his inmost heart.⁴

Stella.

For a threefold reason are we bidden, at all times, to take the lowest room:—

Augustine.

(1) Because of the safety of this position: from it none can fall.

(2) Because of the tranquillity of which such a position allows. It is the lofty station which is exposed to moral as well as to physical storms, and He who prescribes humility has given the characteristic of the Saviour, that He *shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*.

Isa. xxxii. 2.

(3) Because of the exaltation which by God's appointment shall follow upon humility: *he who humbleth himself shall be exalted*.

Peraldus.

¹ Ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ὑψῶν ἑαυτὸν ταπεινωθήσεται, καὶ ὁ ταπεινῶν ἑαυτὸν ὑψωθήσεται. — “Notabile est quod dicit, *qui se exaltat*, non qui exaltatur. Nam, ut dicit Gregorius, Non potestas sed elatio in crimine est. *Et qui se humiliat exaltabitur*. — Notabile est quod dicit, *qui se humiliat*, scilicet voluntarie; non qui humiliatur, quasi ex necessitate.”—*Gorranus*.

² “Humiliat Deus suos ut exaltet, sicut mundus elevat suos ut dejiciat.

Quemadmodum volens ut parva ignis flamma elevetur, et in altum feratur eam flabelli motu et veloci agitatione deprimit, sic Deus nos deprimit, ut extollat, dejicit deorsum ut sursum erigat.”—*Stella*.

³ “Ille dignior qui humilior.”—*Cassian*.

⁴ The promise is only to him who is “active in his humiliation, passive in his exaltation.”—*Bp. Brownrigg*.

•• “Domine Jesu Christe, separa nos à malis: da nobis Sabbatum in-

ternæ quietis, ut intrans in domum nostræ conscientiæ incorpores nos

Tibi: conforta in nobis vim digestivam spiritualem calore charitatis, virtute verbi, opere misericordiæ, exemplo bonæ operationis, et assiduitate orationis; ut cibus salutis, digestus in stomacho nostri intellectus, digeratur et in hepate affectus, et conveniens nutrimentum ad omnia membra bonæ operationis transmittatur. Domine, qui nos ad religionem et ad convivium

sacræ Scripturæ invitasti, doce nos per veram cordis, oris, et operis humilitatem, recumbere in novissimo loco; ut liberemur à curiositate superstitionis, sanemur à morbo cupiditatis, et eripiamur à puteo periculosæ negationis ut glorificemur in die resurrectionis coram simul discumbentibus. Amen."—*Albertus Magnus.*

THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. MATTHEW XXII. 34—46.

Mark xii. 28.
Luke x. 25.

(34) *But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence,¹ they were gathered together.²*

Mark vi. 20;
xii. 37.

Gerhard.

John xi. 47.

Rainsant.

WE learn from the verse before this that *the common people*, who so often *heard Him gladly*, were *astonished* at our Blessed Lord's *doctrine*. Theirs was the wonder and admiration which oftentimes prepares men's hearts to receive the truth. *But³* the pride and prejudice of the Pharisees blinded their eyes to the proofs of Divine power which Christ was continually working, and hardened their hearts, so that almost every display of His Godhead, and every proof of His Divine wisdom, were made by them the occasions of fresh blasphemy against Him, and of renewed efforts to take away His life. Nothing, indeed, blinds men so much to the light of the truth as the spirit of pride. This was especially evinced in the case of the Pharisees, who boasted of their knowledge of Holy Scripture and of the whole Jewish law, were proud of their learning and of the estimation in which they were held by their countrymen, and yet, through their self-conceit and pride, were utterly blind to the signs and hardened against the testimony which Holy Scripture bore to the truth of Christ's claims to be the Messiah, the Son of David.⁴

¹ "Ἐφίμωσε [from φιμός, a curb or muzzle], literally 'had put a muzzle on their lips,' an idiom frequently to be met with in the Greek writers, as Josephus de Bello Jud. i. 22, 23; Lucian de Morte, Per. 15."—*Bloomfield*.

² "Conveniunt in unum—ut scilicet multitudine vincerent quem ratione superare non poterant"—*Op. imperfect.*

³ "Pharisæi autem (οἱ δὲ). Particula autem adversativa est: quasi dicat Evangelista, non sicut turbæ admirati, sed invidiâ agitati sunt."—*Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

⁴ "Considère que tout le bonheur de l'homme consiste à s'approcher de Jésus; et si les Pharisiens avaient su faire leur profit des belles occasions qu'ils avaient de la faire, ils se seraient procuré autant de bonheur,

In the incidents recorded in this chapter we have an illustration of what is meant by St. Paul when he tells us that *we have an High Priest who was in all points tempted like as we are*. He speaks not of one special temptation, but of a life full of temptations; and in this place we have instances of the submission of Christ to the temptation of sinners, and the way in which He was continually surrounded by the snares of His enemies.

(1) We find the Herodians and Pharisees seeking to entangle Him as to the lawfulness of paying tribute to Cæsar, that so they might destroy His credit with the multitude, or might arouse the jealousy of the temporal power of Rome.

(2) On their discomfiture, the Sadducees crowded around Him, and endeavoured to ensnare Him on the two questions of the future state and of the marriage of her who had had seven husbands.

(3) As soon as the Sadducees had been *put to silence*, we have here the Pharisees trying their powers to destroy His reputation by the captious question as to which of the commandments was the greatest, since, as men's minds were divided on the subject, His answer must needs offend many. In the midst of all these temptations, by His replies to those who sought to ensnare Him, He manifested not only that He was the Divine Wisdom, but He showed also His meekness and gentleness towards sinners.

Our Blessed Lord had silenced the Sadducees with the declaration that they erred from *not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God*. Whereupon the Pharisees, whose special boast it was that they understood the Scriptures, and professed great devotion to God, came forward to do that which the Sadducees had failed to accomplish. And that they might do this the more surely, they selected one to be their spokesman whose profession made him acquainted with the Scriptures—putting forth a *lawyer*, or scribe, as their representative.

This act of the Pharisees, in coming to the aid of the Sadducees, reveals the malignity of their hearts. Though bitterly hostile to each other, yet they forgot this in their desire to entrap our Saviour. And though our Blessed Lord

comme en abusant ils ont attiré sur eux de disgraces et de malheur. Car comme la lumière fait mal aux yeux chassieux, ou affectes de quelque malignité, et éclaire ceux qui sont bien disposés : ainsi les personnes affectées des habitudes vitieuses, telles qu'étaient les Pharisiens pleins d'envie et d'orgueil, retirent du dommage des

approches de Jésus-Christ; celles au rebours qui se tiennent près de lui avec humilité et pureté d'intention, y reçoivent des lumières divines et toutes sortes d'avantages. Voy quel fruit tu recueilles l'en approchant si souvent, par les exercices de l'oraison, et des communions qui te sont si fréquentes."—*Rainsant*.

Heb. iv. 15.

Matt. xxi. 15
—22.

Matt. xxi. 23
—33.

Matt. xxi. 34
—46.

Ludov.
Granat.

Ver. 29.

Mark xii.
Hofmeister.

Jerome.

had confirmed the truth of the Resurrection, which the Sadducees denied, and which the Pharisees asserted, yet, in place of being pleased at this support, the latter immediately join their discomfited foes, in order, if possible, to involve Him in some contradiction or opposition to God's Word; and were, like Herod and Pilate three days afterwards, for the occasion, made friends together by their common enmity to Christ.

They were *gathered together* in order to arrange what questions should be asked, and to consult how best they might entrap Christ in His words. In this Gospel we have these two all-important questions answered—

(1) What is the law: what is its sum and substance, and how may it be fulfilled? Our Blessed Lord sums up the law by telling these Pharisees, that the fulfilment of it consists in love to God and to our neighbour.

(2) What is the Gospel: what are the good tidings and the benefits of Christ's incarnation: in short, *what think ye of Christ?* And the answer to this question is, that He who is the Son of David according to the flesh, and so man, and the brother of all men, is also the Lord of David, the very and eternal God.

(35) *Then one of them, which was a lawyer,¹ asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying,*

The word *tempting* (*πειράζων*) does not necessarily imply that the lawyer asked Him captiously, or that he sought anything else than information upon a question much debated amongst the Jews at that time.² His assent to the words of the Saviour betokens honesty of purpose on his part; and Christ's commendation, *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God*, confirms this view. Some commentators suppose that the lawyer began his questioning maliciously, but that, being struck by the unexpected answers of Christ, he ended by acknowledging the truth of His words, and that this acknowledgment of a change of mind on his part led to our Saviour's declaration. Others, again, think that from the first he was an earnest seeker of the truth, and desired really to know what was *the great commandment of the law*, and that the other Pharisees made use of this his honest longing for

¹ *A lawyer.* The Syriac and Persian versions read, *that was learned*, or *skilful, in the law*. The Arabic version reads here *a scribe*, as in Mark xii. 28.

² "*Tentans idem est quod probans et experimentum capiens.*"—*Cornelius*

à Lapid. "Il semble que ce docteur de la loi, qui était d'entr'eux, ne vint pas tant le tenter à mauvais dessein, que faire épreuve de cette science si divine que l'on admirait dans tous Ses discours."—*De Saci.*

the truth, and urged him to put this question; he desiring only to know that which was true, they hoping to entangle Christ in His words. Gerhard Stier.

Be this as it may, we see here that the Pharisees, who knew the letter of Holy Scripture, and were instructed in the words of the law, were not convinced by the answers of Christ. It is not a knowledge of the words of God's law which disposes us to receive His truth and to obey His will, but an honest heart and faith in Him. Rainsant.

(36) *Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*

The Pharisees, by the mouth of this lawyer, call the Saviour *Master*, though they were no disciples of His, professing a respect for Him whom they sought to entangle in His speech; and they ask for *the great*—that is, the greatest—*commandment in the law*, who were breaking the whole law in their insidious attempts to entrap Christ. Let those ask for the greater who have fulfilled the smaller commands of God. Konigsteyn.
Chrysostom

The question which this lawyer put to Christ was one which was warmly discussed amongst the various schools of the Scribes and Pharisees at the time when our Blessed Lord was on the earth. Various were the opinions as to the superior importance of this or that precept of the law.¹ Some made the great commandment of the law to be that which relates to free-will offerings; others considered that the rigid observance of the Sabbath fulfilled the most important precept;² others regarded the command for the payment of tithes as of primary importance; whilst others made the great commandment of the law to be that which directed the offering of the prescribed sacrifices. To this latter opinion the Scribe seems to refer when, after hearing the answer of Christ, he adds, *Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but He: and to love Him with* Bede.
Mansl.

¹ Thus Stier quotes from R. Simlai, in the "Tractate Makkoth," this question: "If Moses had enjoined upon us 365 prohibitions and 248 commands, making in all 613 different precepts and ordinances, surely all these cannot be equally important, nor every transgression equally grievous! Which, then, are the important, and which the inconsiderable?"—*Stier on the Words of the Lord Jesus* (English Translation, vol. iii. p. 177).

² Then the observance of the three meals on the Sabbath is reckoned by some as among the great commandments: see in St. Luke xiv. 1, Gospel for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity. "These three meals are a great matter, for it is one of the *great commandments in the law*" [Tzeror Ham-mor, fol. 3, 3]. See note on Gospel for Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, vol. iii. p. 3.

Mark xii. 32,
33.

all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

Barradius.

Had Christ done as the Pharisees seem to have expected—had He selected one particular class of observances, and declared these to be of the *greatest* importance—they would doubtless have accused Him of disparaging other commandments of God, whilst He would have increased the enmity of those who contended for the primary importance of laws which He had passed by.

Deut. vi. 5;
x. 12;
xxx. 6.
Luke x. 27.

(37) *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt¹ love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

Salmeron.

Thou shalt. This love, which our Blessed Lord declares to be the fulfilling of the law, is that which is to fill our whole future life. It must, indeed, be begun here, but it is not to end here; it is to continue, and to be perfected, in the life to come. In this it differs from faith and hope, which are sometimes joined with it; for faith shall no longer have place where all things are seen, and hope must disappear where all things are enjoyed. And the object of our love is called *the Lord thy God*. The *Lord*, because He is the Creator of all; *God*, because He sustains all things by His providence. And yet more than this: *thy God*, inasmuch as He hath given Himself for each one of us, for every individual member of the family of man; because He is thy Redeemer, thy Justifier, thy Sanctifier, thy Guide in this world, and thy glory and happiness in the world to come.² He is *the Lord thy God*, for He has created thee; has adopted thee as His son; and has blessed thee with abundant gifts, and continues to heap on thee innumerable benefits.³

Bonaventura.

Jansen Yp.

Chrysostom.

And He says that we are to *love*. He says not that we are to fear merely, for He speaks to us not as servants, but as children, and would have us not fear Him as Lord only, but

¹ Ἀγαπήσεις.—“*Diliges*. Futurum est indicativi, pro imperativo, *Dilige*; et hoc more Hebraico.”—*Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

² “Ait Dominum Deum tuum, ut sic te ad amorem invitaret, siquidem Deus ita tuus est, ut nemo illum a te si nolueris auferre possit.”—*Ph. Diez*.

³ “Diligendus Deus *super omnem honorem*, quia est summa gloria; *super omnem scientiam*, quia est summa sapientia; *super omnem voluptatem*,

quia est summum gaudium; *super omnem ornatum*, quia est summa pulchritudo; *super omnes homines*, quia est summus noster amicus; *super omnia*, quia in Ipso sunt omnia et Ipse est τὸ πᾶν. *Per omnes*, Ipsum propter Se ipsum, et reliqua propter Ipsum amando. Cum Deus nos amat, non nisi propter Se nos amat; ergo et nos non diligamus aliter nisi propter Se ipsum.”—*Gerhard*.

love Him as *our Father*. Nor does He say that we are to know God, for this is implanted within our nature itself. But He bids us *love*, since this is more perfect than either fear or knowledge, for *perfect love casteth out fear*; and He is commanding that in which consists the perfection of man. And again, as He is speaking to the heart, He says *thou shalt love*, since love is the property of the heart. We are, then, to *love* Him with readiness and delight—not merely to serve Him as though we were performing a hard duty or a bitter task. We are to love Him with the heart, and not merely to obey Him as in proffering sacrifices, or in paying tithes, and in such outward acts of devotion as those which made up so large a portion of the religion of His questioners.

1 John iv. 18.

Ludolph.

Tostatus.

Alb. Magius.

Hugo de S.
Charo.Bellarmine,
De Mor.
lib. ii. c. 13.

Maldonatus.

Augustine,
De Doct.
Christ. c.
22.Pseudo-
Chrysos-
tom.

In this injunction to *love* God with *all* our heart, with *all* our soul, and with *all* our mind, we are emphatically bidden to love Him with all the powers which He has given us: so that whatever else may be implied in this reduplication of the command, in it our Divine Master tells us that the strength of the intellect, the affections, and the desires of His creatures are to centre in Him; that in our inmost thoughts and in our outward life, with the affections of our nature, and with the intellect, which is His great gift to us, we are to love as well as to serve Him.¹ He only can be truly said to love God with all his heart and soul and mind, whose whole intellectual strength is given to the things of God, whose wisdom is employed alone for God, whose thoughts turn to the revelation which God has given to man, and whose memory holds firmly the faith and gratitude which is due towards God.² Threefold is the number of the enemies which would draw us from God: the devil, by his suggestions of evil thoughts; the flesh, by the enticement of sensual pleasures; and the world, by its temptations of business and fashion, by its pomps and its vanities. Against these we are armed with threefold armour, and are bidden to love God in our hearts

¹ “Per cæteras virtutes partem aliquam vel tui vel rerum tuarum Deo donas. Per castitatem, corporis continentiam; per eleemosynas, partem divitiarum; per fidem, partem intellectus tui. Adhuc enim ad alia, corpore, divitiis, intellectu uteris, etiam Deo non offenso. At in amore totum tuum cor, totam animam, totam mentem Deo tribuis. Deinde hoc solum habes, quod liberè Ei dare potes. Noli hoc parum dividere, sed integrum da. Da, inquam, non commodato ad tempus, sed absolutè in

perpetuum. Semper enim currit hoc præceptum de diligendo Deo, *Charitas nunquam excidit* [1 Cor. xiii. 8]; ne quidem tunc, quum cæteræ virtutes omnes evacuabuntur.”—*Stapleton*.

² See further on this the Commentary on the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity; also Dr. Barrow's xxiii. and xxiv. Sermons,—“Of the Love of God,”—and his xxv. and xxvi. Sermons,—“Of the Love of our Neighbour.” See also Bishop Butler's xi., xii., xiii., and xiv. Sermons preached at the Rolls Chapel.

Alvernus.
Prov. xxiii.
28.
Peraldus.

and with *all* our heart, and so give no place for the evil suggestions of Satan; to will His will in all things, and so escape from the yoke of fleshly lusts; to bind the faculties of our mind to His wisdom, so that we may not fall under the errors of the world.¹

The injunction, then, to love God with all our heart, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, *My son, give Me thine heart*, is twofold. We are bidden—

(1) Positively, to give the whole force of our affection and of our will to our Maker.

Cajetan.

(2) Negatively, we are to cherish in our hearts nothing which is opposed to God, nothing which can diminish our love to Him, nor convert the affection of a child into hatred. If the question arise whether it be possible to do this, to make His will the leading motive of our hearts, and desire for Him the chief occupation of our affections,² let us remember that He who has bidden this never demands from us an impossibility, nor calls upon us to do that which He has not given us power to perform. Whether the gift be one of nature or of grace, we may be sure that He who has told us to love Him with all our heart will enable us to do so. Man, indeed, must love. His heart is made for this; so that, if he love not God, he will yet love, though he love some lesser good, to the exclusion of God, and, therefore, will make that good to be evil to him; as the waters of a fountain, if they find not or if they make not a channel in which they may run, are scattered and lost, or even become stagnant and a source of corruption.

Augustine,
on Ps.
xxxii.

Mand.

If we desire to know whether we have this love of God in our hearts, we shall know, on examination, by these marks:—

(1) By the longing of the heart after Him, the desire to feel more of His presence.

(2) By the readiness with which we resist the temptations which would draw us from Him.

(3) By the rectitude of the motives by which we do His will: that this is not merely from fear of man, nor from the desire of pleasing the world and of obtaining temporal advantages.

(4) By the readiness with which we do His will. For if in our hearts we really love Him, and our will is to do His will,

¹ "Totum exigit a te quod totum te fecit."—Augustine.

² "Chrysostomus dicit, principium dilectionis est duplex: dilectio enim potest fieri ex passione, et ex iudicio rationis. Ex passione, cum nescit homo vivere sine eo quod diligit, ex ratione

secundum quod diligit ut ratio dictat. Dicit ergo quod ille ex toto corde diligit qui diligit carnaliter, ille ex anima qui ex iudicio rationis. Et nos Deum utroque modo debemus diligere."—Th. Aquinas.

then our love towards Him will lead us readily to *keep His commandments.* John xiv. 15.

(5) By our indifference to the world and its possessions, and the readiness with which we use the goods of our stewardship for the flock of Christ.

(6) By our patience under suffering and in adversity.¹

Bonaventura.

And this love to God which is here enjoined upon us is that which accords with the nature of man, and is not, therefore, to be learnt as something without us; nor can it be made the subject of rules. We may, however, rekindle it when it seems almost extinct, and cherish it when it seems almost ready to perish—

(1) By the remembrance of God's past mercies and His continued love for us, who is love itself, and who loved us before we loved Him. Rom. xii. 1. 1 John iv. 16. Ephes. i.

(2) By the recollection of the innumerable benefits which He still heaps upon us, who is not only goodness, but especially is good to us.

(3) By the memory of His gracious promises to us; that He is not only ready to forgive us our past sins, but also to guide us unto death. Gerhard.

For a testimony of God's past mercies and an assurance of His continued presence and protection the Jews were commanded to preserve the ark of the testimony, made of wood and covered with gold. We, however, have an ark of the covenant far more precious than one of gold and of wood, even Christ Himself. He is present with us, who is an ark full of all love, overflowing with the testimony of a living charity.² We have in Him not the material manna which fed the Jews in the wilderness, but we have Him who is the antitype itself, *the true bread from heaven*, by which the soul of man is nourished. We have no coffer of wood which John vi. 32.

¹ "Gracia de Valentia in extremo vitæ limine rogata à viro in paucis religioso quantum à Deo distaret cor hominis, respondit, Quantum hujus amor ab Illo: satis innuens Deo proximum esse quisquis amat; imò, in Deo esse, in Deo vivere ac spirare; quia, ut D. Dionysius Areopagita: *Anima ibi est magis ubi amat, quam ubi animat.*"—Lobbetius.

² "Extende sinus tuos, O anima Christiana; dilata tabernacula tua: operi os tuum, O cor amoris avidum; ut tantam et tam magnam rem, qualis est Deus, capere queas. Si avarus ille dives qui uberrimum annum vidit horrea ac celaria sua dilatare cupiebat,

ut tantos capere fructus valerent, et, animæ suæ blandiens, sic dicebat: *Habes, O anima mea, multos fructos in plures repositos annos: gaude, lætare, dilatare, et frui eis* [Luc. xii. 19]. Quotò magis anima Christiana, quæ annos uberrimos Ægypti capere potest, nempe beatitudinis bona in annos plurimos—hoc est, in æternitate reposita—lætari et gaudere deberet, et, sibi ipsi blandiens, illud Esaiæ cantare ac dicere: *Dilata locum tentorii tui, et pelles tabernaculorum tuorum extende: ne parcas, longos fac funiculos tuos, et clavos tuos consolida* [Isaiæ liv. 2]; quia magnum bonum in te capere debes, quod est Deus."—Avendaño.

contains the rod of Aaron as a proof of God's love to us, but we have the ark itself, Christ Jesus, by whose wounds and stripes we have been healed, and whose life and words, and love towards us, and the works which He doeth within us, are a perpetual testimony of His love and the incitement of that love which we owe to Him who *first loved us*.

Isa. lili. 5.

Barradius.

As at so many other periods of His ministry, our Blessed Lord here answers the captiousness of man with forbearance and exceeding tenderness, not rebuking even whilst He silenced those who came to tempt Him. In this He gives a lesson to all of us, but especially to His ministers, to bear tenderly with the doubting mind, and to answer lovingly the objections of those who yet come not in an honest and good heart, in order to be enlightened and instructed as to the will of God.

Rainsant.

(38) *This is the first and great commandment.*¹

The first, and therefore that which is the production of all the others; *the great*, and therefore that which is the consummation of all. *The Alpha and the Omega* of the commandments of God.

Avancinus.

The lawyer did but ask for *the great*—that is, the greatest—*commandment*. Christ in His answer tells him that the *great commandment in the law* is imperfect unless with it we observe another. Hence He calls it the *first*, to imply that there is a second.

Victor
Antioch.

The precepts of God are many, and yet but one: many through their diversity and the variety of forms of evil which they forbid; one, since they tend to one result—love to God and man.

Gorranus.

This commandment of loving God is declared by our Blessed Lord to be *the first* commandment.² It is so—

(1) Because it relates to Him who is the beginning and source of all things.

(2) Because it is coeval with the creation of man, since the law impressed upon our nature bids us love Him who is the author of our being.

Queuel.

¹ "This commandment, by which the worship of the one God is commanded, Deut. vi. 4, is not only one of those which were written in their phylacteries, fastened on their posts, and read in their houses daily; but to note it to be the *great commandment*, indeed above all others, it is observable, that in Deuteronomy the

words in the Hebrew which begin and end it have the last letter written very big, and noted in the margent to be so written."—*Hammond*.

² Aben Ezra (in Exod. xxxi. 18) says, "The root of all the commandments is, when a man loves God with all his soul and cleaves unto Him."

(3) Because all other commandments relate to this, and refer to Him who is the author of all law and the source of all existence. Luca Brug.

(4) Because He who is Love is the source and means from whom we obtain peace to keep all His commands.

This commandment is also spoken of as *the great*, or *greatest*, commandment. It is called not merely *first*, but *great*, as though human language were too feeble by one word to express the dignity of the commandment, as before it had been necessary to use a reduplication of words to express the manner of our love.¹ It is greater than faith, for this shall fail; whereas the Apostle tells us that *charity* (or love) *never faileth*, but shall remain for ever. Faith leads us to God, and love embraces Him: by faith we see God; by love we enjoy Him. This commandment is great— Bossuet.
1 Cor. xiii. 8.

(1) Because of its object, which is nothing less than God Himself. Wicellius.

(2) Because of the perfection and entirety of that love which is required, which is to be that of the heart and soul and mind.

(3) Because no one, without the great gift of God's Holy Spirit, can so love. Arias Mont.

(4) Because all other commandments, of what kind soever they may be, are subordinate to this.

(5) Because of the reward promised to those who keep this commandment—for *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.*² Abelly.
1 Cor. ii. 9.

(6) Because of the greatness of its duration, for it lasteth on into eternity; for whilst faith and hope necessarily cease, yet love *never faileth*. 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

It is the *greatest* commandment, then, in necessity, in extent, and in duration: it is the *first* in nature, in order, in importance, in time, and in endurance.³ Boys.
Bengel.

¹ "Hoc mandatum maximum est: maximè à Deo requisitum, maximè à nobis curandum, maximam quietem et pacem afferens: maximè in cœlo coronandum, si impleatur; maximè in inferno puniendum, si negligatur. Maximus Deus; maxima affectio, amor. Ex maximorum duorum connubio maximus est partus. Maximum mandatum: sine quo reliqua parva; imò, sine quo, secundum Apostolum, ipsa maxima nihil sunt [1 Cor. xiii. 3]. Contra verò quæ minima sunt, cum maximo mandato maxima redduntur.

Calix aquæ frigidæ ex dilectione res maxima est, siquidem ipsum meretur cœlum."—*Paulus de Palacio*.

² "Amor Dei divitem facit. Nullæ sunt majores divitiæ quàm Deum possidere et charitatem habere, inquit S. Laurentius Justin. lib. de ligno vitæ, cap. 6. 'Sine charitate dives pauper est, cum charitate pauper dives est charitas thesaurus absconditus.' Idem ibid. in 1 Joan. iv. Amare Deum est esse ad omnia liberrimum."—*Hartung*.

³ "Maxima virtus et virtutum omnium regina est charitas, 1 Cor. xiii.

Lev. xix. 18.
Matt. xix. 19.
Mark xii. 31.
Luke x. 27.
Rom. xiii. 9.
Gal. v. 14.
James ii. 8.

(39) *And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

He does not say that the *second* commandment is equal to, but that it is *like unto*, the *first*, for both of these are commandments of love.

Soarez.

There are three objects of love here pointed out:—

(1) That of man to God—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.*

(2) That of ourselves, our whole self, body and soul; for this is involved in the command that we are to love our neighbour, and to love him as we love ourselves. Self-love is, then, here implied.

Augustine,
De Doct.
Christ.
c. 27, lib. 1.
Corn. à Lap.

(3) That of our neighbour—*Thou shalt love thy neighbour.*

Luzerne.

There is, indeed, no specific command, here or elsewhere, that we should love ourselves, for this love is prior to any command—it is a part of our nature; the instinctive commandment given at our creation. Instinct always teaches us to love that which is good. We may be in error as to what is good, but what we love we love because it seems to us good. As, then, we love ourselves for our good, we are called upon to love our neighbour for his good. The command is not to love him equally with ourselves, but with the like kind of love which we have for ourselves.¹

Tirinus.

The object of the love which is here commanded to every Christian is his *neighbour*; that is, he who loves God aright will love himself in a proper degree, without selfishness, and in the same unselfish way he will love his *neighbour*.² Every man is our neighbour—

Bengel.

(1) Because he has the same nature as ourselves.

(2) Because he has sprung from the same common parents. In this respect man differs from the animals whom God has created: they spring from many progenitors, man from one pair.

13. Quare charitas nobilior est religione: nobilius enim est diligere Deum ex toto corde, quàm Eidem offerre sacrificia. Adde, charitas quasi regina imperat sacrificia, ceterosque religionis aliarumque virtutum actus. Denique, amor nobilissimus est affectus et actus, qui præcellit timore, honore, ceterisque omnibus."—*Corn. à Lapide*.

¹ "Love withal thy neighbour as thyself.

Not love as much, but as thyself, in this,

To let it be as free as thine own is—
Without respect of profit or reward,

Deceit or flattery, politic regard,
Or anything but naked charity."

Geo. Chapman, The Tears of Peace.

² "Regula amandi proximum est quisque sibi. Nemo se fictè nemo non sincerè amat. Nemo sibi vult malum nè minimum quidem: nemo non sibi vult bonum et inter bona optimum. Debes ergo (et hoc mandatum magnum est) amare non fictè proximum; amoliri, quia potest, ab illo malum, curare bonum. At proximus tuus non est unus sed omnes. Non debes ergo affectum ita uni affigere ut aliis subtrahas."—*Arancinus*.

(3) Because he is heir of the same promises as ourselves, and is born to an inheritance of happiness with God.

(4) Because he is a member of the same body, through the incarnation of Christ. In this he differs from the angels, whose nature Christ took not, and who are, therefore, our neighbours neither by nature nor by the incarnation of Christ, as all men are. Heb. ii. 16.
Gorranus.

(5) Because he has a like capacity for future glory with ourselves. Aquinas ii. 2.
q. 44, art. 7.

The love of our neighbour is comprehended in the love of God, which is the source of all true love to man, who is the image of God.¹ And the love of our neighbour is a manifestation to others that we have the love of God within us. But it is more than this: it makes us like God: for since, by loving God, we are made like to Him, so, by loving man, we are transformed into the likeness of Christ, whose great love to mankind was shown in His incarnation and death for us.² This love of our neighbour, again, is not felt for him in diminution of that which we owe to God. Our love is not to be divided between the Creator and our fellow-men. These are not two loves, but one. The love which we bear to God is the source of our love to our neighbour. In him we love God, who has commanded us to love our brother, and given us grace to perform this command. Our love to man is, as it were, out of the superabundance of our love to God, and so far from diminishing that which we owe to our Maker, it augments and cherishes it. Queenel.

Augustine.
Bonaventura.

L.ornez.

But there are two points of similitude insisted upon in these words of our Blessed Lord—

(1) The commandment to love our brother is *like that first and great commandment* which enjoins upon us the love of God. In this we may learn the purity of that love which is required from us. It is to be *like* and to flow from the love of God Himself; and since the love which we feel for Him must needs be pure and holy, so must that love with which we regard our fellow-men be also pure and holy. Coster.

(2) The love which we manifest to others must be like the love which we have for ourselves. We see here the perfect

¹ "Qui proximum amat, imaginem Dei amat. *Faciamus, inquit, hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram* [Gen. i. 26]. Et hæc est ratio amandi proximum perinde ac seipsum, quia Dei imago et similitudo est, et æque quoque ut ipse quantum est ex natura. Sicut rex in sua imagine vel contemnitur vel honoratur, sic Deus in

homine vel oditur vel diligitur; non enim potest hominem odire qui Deum amaverit, nec potest Deum amare qui hominem odit."—*Konigstejn*.

² "Amor in eandem imaginem Christi transformavit amantem Christum."—*Bonaventura, cxii. in Vit. S. Fran.*

Stier.

equality of all men in God's sight. There is a solemn truth taught us in these words, *as thyself*. Many will call their neighbour to repentance, and exhort and encourage him in the performance of Christian duties, who yet forget these duties themselves, and at least in secret disregard them. But the love which we are bidden to show to another we are required to have also for ourselves.

Corn. & Lap.

The two commands are alike—

(1) The love of our neighbour proceeds from the love of God implanted in us, and like begets like.¹

(2) It proceeds not from any natural endowment in man apart from God's gifts, but is from Him.

(3) It is like in extent to the first command; it embraces the whole second table of the law, as love to God comprehends the whole of the first.

Lienard.

(4) Its object is like, for in man we have the image and reflection of the Father.

(5) Like the first and great commandment of the law, the second is not temporal, but eternal. The love which we have to others has its beginning in this life, but its abidance and perfection in the life to come.

Coster.

We cannot, indeed, love God when we hate those whom He has bidden us love,² nor when we refuse to cherish those whom He has appointed as the objects of our love. And since the whole teaching of Christ inculcated the necessity of purity of heart, and tended to implant the inward affection, not the outward habit merely, our Blessed Lord does not tell us as the second commandment that we are to assist and do acts of mercy to all those who need, but He points out the source of all true charity, the spring from whence all deeds of mercy issue, and bids us love our neighbour.

Luzerne.

Gerhard.

But we are bidden to love our neighbour as we love ourselves. We are here commanded—

Augustine.

(1) To love in another what we ought to love in ourselves—our true nature, the image and similitude of God. It is men who are to be loved, not their sins.

¹ "Amor Dei et proximi unicus est spiritus. Fallitur qui se alterutrum separare posse putat. Malè orat qui unicum postulat. Malè orat qui pro se tantum excluso proximo orat. Videns Moyses præcepta primæ tabulæ violata à populo, utramque projecit tabulam et contrivit, in qua dilectio proximi præcipiebatur; quia amor unus sine altero non consistit. Qui amare proximum negligit, profectò Deum diligere

nescit."—*Hartung*.

² "Alteruter ignis nobis necessarius est, aut ignis amoris aut ignis inferni. Si non arserimus igne charitatis, ardebimus igne gehennæ. Qui charitatis igne præditus est, ad cælum evolabit, duabus illis alis—amore Dei et proximi. Qui igne illo caret, evehi non poterit, sed peccati pondere depri-metur ad infernum."—*Matt. Faber*.

(2) We are to love our neighbour in the order marked out—below God, but above earthly possessions.

(3) With relation to that end for which we are to love ourselves—for eternity; and this involves— Alverna.

(4) The extent of our love: it is to be not in words, but in truth; doing to and desiring for, him all good, as we do and desire it for ourselves; not taking from him his good name or possessions, since we desire these things to be given to, not taken from, us.¹ Corn. & Lap.

Though these Pharisees only asked our Blessed Lord for one, the first and great commandment of the law, yet because the love of our neighbour is indissolubly linked with the love which we owe to God, He added this. And there was deep significance in His doing so. They said, as men may say now, *I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess*: I am therefore doing my duty to, I am loving, God. Our Blessed Lord adds another test, in which they notoriously failed, and bids them love their brethren also.² There was also, it may be, a reproof intended in these words. They asked for the first and greatest commandment of the law, whilst they were breaking the second. Christ adds this latter, as though He would touch their consciences with their want of love and their malice towards Him whom they regarded as man merely, as their *neighbour*; and in proving them to be wanting in love to Him who was their *neighbour*, according to their own confession, He proves them to be wanting in love to God Himself. Gerhard.
Luke xviii.
12.
Stier.
Hugo de S.
Charo.
Konigsteyn.

There is a deep significance in this word *neighbour* coupled with the attempt of the Pharisees and Sadducees to entrap Christ. Our minds are naturally carried back to that parable in which He presented to us the picture of the ruined estate of mankind, fallen *among thieves*, and showed us His love and tenderness to the children of Adam, to whom He had made Himself *neighbour*, in order that He might heal them.

¹ "Quod in illis diligit, in se ipso habet totum atque perfectum. Ita cum diligit proximum tamquam se ipsum, non invidet ei, quia nec sibi ipsi: præstat ei quod potest, quia et sibi ipsi: non eo indiget, quia nec se ipso: tantum Deo indiget, cui adhærendo beatus est. Nemo autem illi eripit Deum. . . . Hic vir quamdiu est in hac vita, utitur amico ad rependendam gratiam; utitur inimico ad patientiam; utitur quibus potest ad

beneficentiam; utitur omnibus ad benevolentiam."—*Augustine de Morib. Ecc. Cathol.* c. 26.

² "In hoc loco nos Christus docet ubi Deum diligendum quærere debeamus; nempe sub cruce—id est, necessitate proximi. Hic quære; hic dilige. Sunt qui Deum in sublimi quærunt, in cruce autem, ubi invenitur, non quærunt. Ideo audient, *Esurivi, et non dedistis Mihi manducare* [Matt. xxv. 42]."—*Ferus.*

Matt. vii. 12.
1 Tim. i. 5.

(40) *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

Gloss. inter-
lin.

Coster.

Rom. xiii. 8.

Soarez.

In these two commandments may be comprised the whole decalogue, and all the exhortations and teaching of the prophets have these two for their object and end. So that those who are really actuated in what they do by the love of God and of their neighbour are able to perform, and in reality fulfil, all that they are bidden in the law of God, all that they are called upon to perform by the prophets. Whence St. Paul says, *he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law*; for he who loves truly his neighbour, loves God who has prescribed this love to us; for he who loves his neighbour aright, loves him because God has so commanded, and consequently loves God who has given the command.¹

Luca Brug.

Gerhard.

On these two commandments *hang* all the law and the prophets; that is, these two do not merely tend to the fulfilment of the law, but the performance of the law absolutely depends upon the prior giving up of the heart to God, and this involves, as an inseparable consequence, the love for our neighbour. These two must exist at one and the same time; indeed, one of these cannot exist in its perfection without the other.² And from these two rills from the same fountain of love flow the whole law: not merely the moral law, but the law ceremonial also—the law of divine worship—for he who loves God with *all his heart, and soul, and mind*, will desire to obey Him in the minutest particular which He has commanded. He who loves his neighbour will desire not to offend against the laws of decency and order prescribed in Christ's Church, and thus put a stumbling-block in his brother's way.

Whilst, however, these two—love to God and love to our neighbour—proceed from one source, yet they are not one and the same precept, but are diverse; not, that is, from diversity of the love, but from the distinction which must be observed in the mode of loving: for—

(1) We love our neighbour not for himself, but for God; but we love God not for another, nor with reference to anything beyond, but for Himself alone.

¹ "Rectè amor Dei et proximi alis comparantur; quia sicut avium alæ sese mutuò juvant, nec una sine altera sursum ferri potest; sic deficiente Dei amore deficit amor proximi et e contra."
—*Emman. ab Incarnatione.*

² "Amor ex amore oriatur, ait Plato, non est amor Dei, si non generat

amorem proximi et vicissim. S. Gregorium in Joannem accipe. 'Per amorem Dei amor proximi gignitur et per amorem proximi amor Dei nutritur, et qui amorem proximi negligit perfecta Deum diligere nescit.'—*Hartung.*

(2) The love which we owe our neighbour has its limits. We are not bidden to love him with *all the heart, and soul, and mind*—that is, beyond all other considerations whatever—as we are called upon to love God; but we are to love our brother with a measured love—we are to love him *as ourselves*, and we cannot love ourselves aright unless we love God.¹ Tostatus.

(41) *While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, (42) saying, What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David.*² Mark xii. 35.
Luke xx. 41.

Christ had convicted of a want of love towards their neighbour, and consequently of an absence of real love towards God, those who tempted Him in order to betray Him: He now shows them the defectiveness of their faith.

The views current amongst the Jews at the incarnation of our Blessed Lord respecting the Messiah were these—

(1) They did not believe that He, who was born of the Virgin Mary, and who did so many mighty works in attestation of His claim, was the Christ.

(2) They believed that Christ, whenever He should appear, and however mighty He might be in worldly power, would yet be only man, *the Son of David*,³ and nothing more. He was continually recognised by this name. Those who acknowledged Him to be the long-expected Messiah, and who owned His Divine power, still spake of Him as *the Son of David*. The two blind men followed Him with the cry, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on us*. In the same way the woman of Canaan supplicated Him on behalf of her daughter: *Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David*. And by the same name He was saluted by the multitudes who thronged around Him at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Ludolph.
Gorranus.

Matt. ix. 27;
xx. 30, 31.

Matt. xv. 22.
Matt. xxi. 9,
Tostatus.

And what the multitudes instinctively confessed, our

¹ “Neque verâ dilectione diligimus invicem nisi diligentes Deum. Diligit enim unusquisque proximum sicut seipsum. Si non diligit Deum, non diligit se ipsum.”—*S. August. in Joannem, tract 87.*

² “Postquam Christus totam legem direxerat ad duo mandata dilectionis, voluit ostendere hæc duo mandata reduci in novum diligibile, quod est Christus. Nihil enim diligitur tanquam Deus et proximus, nisi Ipse Christus, qui in personæ unitate est

verus Deus et verus homo, id est, noster Deus et proximus noster.”—*Ludolph.*

³ “It may be to this view,” and to correct this prevalent error of the Jews, “that it is said of St. Paul immediately on his conversion, that *He preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God* [Acts ix. 20].”—*Note to English Translation of St. Chrysostom on St. Matthew. Oxford, 1851.*

Blessed Lord, as the time of His sufferings drew near, seemed especially to dwell upon. There was a fitness in this. He was about to suffer as the Son of David; for in His human nature, which He derived from David, could He alone suffer. At such a moment, therefore, He would point out and confirm that truth which it was needful for them and for us to know, that whilst He was God of God, David's Lord, He was also David's Son and the brother of man.

Gerhard.

He speaks of David here rather than of Abraham, because Abraham was the father of the whole nation, and even of the Gentile tribes which had descended from Ishmael. But it had been predicted that He who should come was not only to be an Israelite of the seed of Abraham, but was also to be of the house and lineage of David; and since many knew well that He was of this family, He pointed to the fact, that He who should come would be of this family, and that He who spake to them was so.¹

Tostatus.

The stumbling-block to men, not only during the time when our Incarnate Lord abode upon earth, but also at all times since, has been either the lowliness of His nature as man, or the excellency of His nature as very God. Human reason more easily accepts moderate notions of Christ than those which are true.

Bengel.

2 Sam. xxiii.
2.
Acts i. 16;
ii. 30.

(43) *How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying,*

Konigsteyn.
Ant. Patav.

In spirit. That is, under the guidance or inspiration of the Holy Spirit: not in any carnal sense, and after the manner of men; not in his own wisdom, and after his own heart; but in the language and under the guidance of the *Spirit*. In this same way St. Peter speaks of the book of Psalms: *Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.*

Acts i. 16.
Grotius.

¹ "Comme en Abraham étaient données les promesses de la multiplication des fidèles de Jésus-Christ; en David étaient données celles de Son empire éternel. Puisque Dieu Lui avait promis en David *un trône qui durerait plus que le soleil et la lune*, il était beau que David, à que ce trône était promis en figure de Jésus-Christ, fût le premier à reconnaître Son empire, en L'appelant son Seigneur. *Le Seigneur a dit à mon Seigneur.* Comme s'il eût dit: En

apparence c'est à moi à qui Dieu promet un empire qui n'aura point de fin, mais en vérité c'est à vous, ô mon Fils, qui êtes aussi mon Seigneur, qu'il est donné; et je viens en esprit le premier de tous vos sujets vous rendre hommage dans votre trône, à la droite de votre Père, comme à mon souverain Seigneur. C'est pourquoi il ne dit pas en général: *Le Seigneur a dit au Seigneur*; mais, *à mon Seigneur.*"—Bossuet, *Méditations sur l'Évangile.*

Here, then, our Blessed Lord distinctly affirms David to have been the author of the Psalm from which these words are taken, and also as distinctly declares that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit.¹

Corn. à Lap.
Olshausen.

The Pharisees declared that the Messiah was to be the Son of David; our Blessed Lord points out what they, by their silence, confessed was known to them, that David, notwithstanding this, called Him Lord. But a son is not wont to be called a lord by his own father, especially when that father is a king, to whom the son, in worldly power at least, is not greater. An earthly son, moreover, is after the father in point of time, but a *lord* is contemporary with those over whom he has authority, or is prior in time to them, not after them. It is, therefore, evident that the Son of David, the Christ, was to be more than man, and to possess some characteristic which should make Him Lord to His own father after the flesh. 'This apparently impossible combination is true of Him alone who, as man, was the Son, and, as God, the Lord, of David.

Königsteyn.

Menochius.

(44) *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?*

Ps. cx. 1.
Acts ii. 34.
1 Cor. xv. 25.
Heb. i. 13;
x. 12, 13.

The Lord, the Father (Jehovah), *said unto my Lord* (Adonai), the Son. He, indeed, who was the Eternal Word of the Father, was David's Lord before His Incarnation both as the Creator and Redeemer of mankind, whilst in taking upon Him man's nature and being born of *the house and lineage of David*, He became the Son of David.² And these words, *till I make*

Luke ii. 4.

Bengel.

¹ "Our Lord presupposes, as at that time generally acknowledged by the scribes, and confirmed by His own recognition, that David in the 110th Psalm speaks of the Son, the future Christ; in like manner He takes for granted, as a thing acknowledged, the Divine inspiration of the Psalm, so that He can build the proof-question upon it."—*Stier*.

"Ad Messiam pertinere hunc Psalmum agnoverunt Hebræi veteres; quos sequitur Isaac Benarama ad Gen. xlvii. Qui post ortum Christianismum fuerunt negare, id ipsum coeperunt solo odio Christianismi; cum tamen ipse David Kimchi et cum eo alii, ut et apud Justinum Tryphon, Pa. ii. de Messia interpre-

tentur, ubi *de sceptro ex Sione exiture idem dicitur quod hoc Psalmo*."—*Grotius*.

² "Ipse David, Psalmi scriptor, exhibet Dominum Deum, summum יהוה Jehova, loquentem ad Messiam, quem vocat אדוני Adoni—id est, Dominum meum."—*Lamy*. "Non legitur hic Adonai, quod est aliud Dei nomen quod propriè vertitur Dominus, sed Adoni, quod est nomen appellativum significans Dominus meus."—*Luca Brug*. "In Ps. ii. 4, for Adonai the Chaldee paraphrase has מְיִמְרָא (meyimra), the eternal λόγος, or Word of God; from root אמר (amar), dixit. Cf. Acts ii. 34, where St. Peter applies the same prophecy to Christ."—*Wordsworth*.

Barradius.

Bengel.

Tostatus.

Gloss. ap.
Anselm.Maldonatus.
Oislausen.

1 Cor. i. 24.

Gerhard.

Luca Brug.
Gerhard.

Dion. Carth.

Paulus de
Palacio.

Thine enemies Thy footstool, do not, in any way, imply that this seat and power will ever terminate. It is not the eternity of the session which is denied, but it is affirmed that the attacks of the enemies of Christ will not interfere with that session. He shall remain the Lord and Ruler of the world notwithstanding the assaults of the gates of hell.

. And let us note that Christ says not, until I put all enemies under My feet, but until the Father does so. Though all things are to be subject to Him, whose human nature is inseparably united with the Divine, yet it is the Divinity which subjects all things to Him, and not the humanity. Hence He speaks of this as the Father's act. He, indeed, by His own Divine power, puts His enemies and the enemies of His Father under His feet when He glorifies His Father's name on earth. But since this is the special work of that nature of His which is Almighty, and since what the Son doeth, that also doeth the Father, lest it should be thought that this was the work of the manhood, He attributes it to the Father.

Sit Thou on My right hand; in the place, that is, of highest honour and dignity. By this metaphor, which teaches the participation of Christ in the Divine government of the world, is implied, at the same time, the co-equality and co-eternity of the Son with the Father.¹ He was ever, as to His Divine nature, at the right hand of the Father; for He was, even in the beginning of all things, the Word, and *the power of God, and the wisdom of God*. The session, however, here spoken of is that of the human nature of Christ Jesus. And this session is either—

(1) That which pertained to Christ by way of possession: and this He had from the first moment of His incarnation, since He was then equal to the Father; for no other, save God, could be given to man as his Justifier and Redeemer.

(2) That which was given to Christ by way of manifestation at His ascension, when, having drunk of the tears of bitter suffering, He was exalted, as to His human nature, into the heavens.

All there shall be under His feet in the most full and perfect subjection.² The elect shall be there, in whom the flesh has been made subject to the Spirit, and that which was once at enmity to God has become the footstool of Christ.

¹ "Merito David rem narrat stupendam. Quòd caro, quòd sanguis, quòd terra cœlos ascendat, cœlos penetret angelos supergrediatur et in Dei sedeat æqualitate; quòd similis filio hominis, usque ad antiquum

dierum perveniat."—*Paulus de Palacio*.

² Per pedes Christi significantur Ejus divinitas et humanitas: humanitas propter Ejus inferioritatem, divinitas propter portationem [Heb. i. 3]."—*Alvernus*.

And the love which the elect bear to their Lord shall make this their willing subjection to be the perfection of happiness to them ;¹ the unrepentant shall also be there beneath His feet, subject to Him through the power of Godhead, but subject by compulsion and unwillingly, and this shall make their subjection grievous to them. Luca Brug.

In these words of the Psalmist, confirmed as they are by our Blessed Lord's own teaching, we have three truths pointed out—

(1) The essential superiority of Christ, and the distinction which exists between our Blessed Lord and every created being, however exalted. *But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool ?* Heb. i. 13.

(2) His co-equality with the Father : *Sit on My right hand.* For He that was mere man, or in any way inferior to the Father, could not sit on the throne and possess the power indicated by the words, *on My right hand.* Ludolph.

(3) The dominion of Christ, God and Lord² over all, *for He hath put all things in subjection under His feet.* 1 Cor. xv. 27.
Th. Aquinas
on Ps. cx.

Christ has ascended into the heavens, and has sat down at the right hand of the Father, having accomplished our redemption, not that we should slumber and grow indifferent or slothful, but that we should labour to put into subjection under His feet all lusts and appetites and affections which are at enmity with Him, and that He may be *all in all* within us.³ Paulus de Palacio.

(45) *If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son ?*

We must remember that the Jewish notion of the Messiah at the time of the Incarnation was not only that He would be descended from David, but that He would be a king like to him, powerful, unconquerable, yet still only a man. And the question of our Blessed Lord is this : Since Christ is

¹ “ *Sede inquit donec ponam inimicos. Nostra fuit caro, Deo inimica : reconciliati enim sumus, cum inimici essemus. Hanc carnem inimicam, jam reconciliatam, Deus subvexit in cælum ut esset sub pedibus Dei. Non nam vult scabellum suum perire, sed servari : obedientiam scabelli vult, non mortem. Et hic etiam Deus fecit potentiam in brachio suo, ut scabellum inferno dignum, in cœlestibus collocaret.*”—*Paulus de Palacio.*

² “ *Notat Philo de plantat. Noë, grandem esse distinctionem inter hosce titulos : Deus et Dominus : Deus quâ benefacit, Dominus quâ imperat.*”—*Hartung.*

³ “ *Qui tantum credit, reliqua vero malus est, Christum habet sedentem in bono sanè loco, id est, in suo intellectu, in fide. At non habet sedentem in meliori loco, i. e. in voluntate et charitate.*”—*Paulus de Palacio.*

Luca Brug.

Lienard.

Augustine.

Rom. i. 3.

Heb. ii. 11.

Ferus.

Gerhard.

Ps. cx. 1.

confessedly to be the Son of David, and, therefore, by reason of that nature cannot be superior to His father, how comes it that David calls Him Lord, and so indicates His superiority? It cannot be a superiority of that nature which He derives from His descent from David; and therefore he seems to prophesy that Messiah, when He comes, will be of a nature superior to himself, even whilst, according to His descent, equal to him. This difficulty, arising out of the error common to all Jews, could only be solved by the fact of the hypostatic union of two perfect natures—the manhood and the Godhead in one person; and this was only found in Christ, who, since He was, according to the flesh, the son of David, man of the substance of His mother, was also Divine, being God of the substance of the Father.¹ As Divine He was David's Lord; as human He was David's Son: the Lord of David from all eternity, being begotten before the world; the Son of David in time, being born in the world.

We are thus taught by these words:—

(1) That Christ is truly man: for as the father is, so is the son of the same nature; and since David was man, so is Christ man, for *He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

(2) That He is not only man, and a son of David, but the Son promised to David, and prophesied of as the Messiah—He who in Holy Scripture is wont to be spoken of as the Son of David, of whom and by whom are all the promises of God fulfilled.

(3) That He is not only the Son of David, and so human, but He is also the Lord of David, and so Divine.

(4) He is still the Son of David. His human nature is still united to the Godhead, for He has ascended into heaven in our nature. For, lest we should say, What is all this to us, that eighteen hundred years ago Christ became incarnate, by taking to Himself our flesh, we are encouraged by this declaration, *The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.* He is,

¹ “Utrumque teneamus: Unum nobis erit æterna habitatio: alterum nobis est a peregrinatione liberatio. Dominus enim noster Jesus Christus, nisi dignatus esset fieri homo, perisset homo. Factus est quem fecit, ne periret quem fecit. Qui confitetur Deum æqualem Patri Christum, et hominem verum, habet patriam, habet viam. Habet patriam: *In principio*

erat Verbum. Habet patriam: *Cum in forma Dei esset, non rapinam arbitratus est esse Se æqualem Deo.* [Phil. ii. 6.] Habet viam: *Verbum caro factum est.* [Joan. i. 14.] Habet viam: *Semetipsum exinanivit, formam servi accipiens.* [Phil. ii. 7.] Ipse est patria quo imus; Ipse via qua imus. Per Ipsum ad Ipsum eamus, et non errabimus.”—Augustine.

then, seated there as our Strengtheners and Intercessors. *His dominion has not passed away, for it is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* And the promise which the Father has made through the Son is to us, and to our children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.¹

Dan. vii. 14;
iv. 34.

Acts ii. 39.
Ferus.

(46) *And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions.*

Mark xii. 34.
Luke xiv. 16;
xx. 40.

The questioning of the Sadducees and Pharisees took place on the day before the betrayal of Christ, and two days before His crucifixion. It was the last opportunity which they had of asking Him in this way. The exposure of their prejudice and of their ignorance of Holy Scripture, in place of humbling them, sharpened their rage, and seems to have determined them to hasten their accusations against Him. They asked Him no more *questions*; they tempted Him no more; they sought Him no more with the acknowledgment, however hollow, that He was a teacher; they shut their eyes to the light, and closed their ears to the truth; they would learn nothing from Him; henceforth, with malice sharpened through their defeat, they sought but for an opportunity to betray Him to the Romans, and to silence His words by death. They feared, indeed, to *ask Him any more questions*, believing, from past experience, that they should be confounded.² They asked Him, indeed, mocking derisive questions at the time of His last passion, but then it was not to obtain answers: they were not so much questions as scoffs with which they then tried Him.

Tostatus.

Lienard.

Jerome.

Gorranus.

Dion. Carth.

Had the *questions* of the Pharisees sprung from any real desire of knowledge, any wish to be instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, our Blessed Lord would never have silenced them by proposing a question to which they were unable to reply, and which deterred them from asking Him any further questions. They came to Him vaunting their knowledge, and relying on their acquaintance

Origen.

¹ "Qui ignorant mysterium personæ Christi non possunt conciliare Scripturas de Christo in speciem pugnantibus: Verbi gratiâ, quod sit filius Davidis, et quod sit dominus Davidis. Quare, ut Scripturas illas possimus conciliare, tenere nos oportet mysterium personæ Christi — videlicet, Ipsum esse Deum manifestum in carne, seu λόγον incarnatum; verum scilicet

Deum, unâ cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto, et verum hominem, natum ex Maria Virgine. Itaque et filius Davidis est secundum carnem [Rom. i. 3], et dominus Davidis secundum Deitatem."—*Piscator*.

² "Neque ausus fuit. Non solum os eis obturavit, prout antea Phariseis, sed et audaciam eorum compescuit, timore incusso."—*Em. ab Incarnatione*.

Matt. xxii.
21.

Königsteyn.

with Holy Scripture. He showed them that it was as true of them as of the Sadducees, whom He had just before put to silence, that they erred from not really *knowing the Scriptures*, or *the power of God*. Through their blindness the writings of the prophets yielded them no instruction, and they understood not the words which spake of Him who was their *Lord*, though the *Son of Mary*.

The silence of the Pharisees is valuable as an acknowledgment that the interpretation which more recent Jewish expositors and controversialists have affixed to this text was not then known. It is a silent declaration on their part—

(1) That the Psalm from which these words are taken was then believed to have been written by David, and that modern suppositions, that it might be the production of Melchisedek or Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, or the composition of some unknown writer who lived in the days of David, had not then been heard of.

(2) That David spake in this Psalm not from his own wisdom, but by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This is the declaration of Christ Himself: *How . . . doth David in spirit (ἐν πνεύματι)¹ call Him Lord?*

Jaaneon Yp.

Olshausen.

(3) That the Psalm was written of Christ; not, as most modern Jewish interpreters say, of Abraham, of David, of Ezekiel, or of others. Although Jewish commentators try now to evade the force of these words, and refuse to acknowledge that Christ is here referred to, yet they are unable to determine of whom else it could be written. At the time when Christ was upon earth it is evident, from the argument which He founds on the words of this Psalm, and from the acquiescence of the Pharisees, that its Messianic reference was universally accepted. This our Lord sanctions and confirms by the use He makes of it.

By the teaching, then, of Holy Scripture, and by the silence of the Pharisees and adversaries of Christ, who were unable to withstand the arguments of Scripture, and to answer the questions of our Blessed Lord, we are taught—

(1) That Christ is God the Son, and therefore of the same nature as the Father.

Toplarius.

(2) That He is our King, who guides and defends us, sitting on the throne of eternal power.

(3) That in our nature He has entered into heaven, and

¹ Three very important versions, the Cureton-Syriac, the Syr-jer, and the Æthiopic, besides two or three Greek manuscripts, add *ἀγιος*; and though this is most probably a gloss

explanatory of the passage, a marginal note which has crept into the text, such an insertion shows what in the very earliest ages was the received meaning of this verse.

by so doing has given us a pledge and assurance that we may enter there, into that place which He has prepared for us. John xiv. 2.

We are taught also these other practical lessons—

(1) That those who will not recognise the great truth that Christ is both God and man, that He is at the same time the Son and the Lord of David, cannot reconcile seeming differences in God's Word, nor understand Holy Scripture.

(2) That the power of the Divine Word, and the truths which come from heaven, are able to confound all adversaries, and to silence all sophistries.

(3) That the glory and the power of Christ were never greater than at the moment when He was about to suffer; when, more than at any other time, He filled man's heart with fear, restrained the hands of those who came to seize Him, and silenced by the force of His words the tongues of these Pharisees. In these, as in so many other ways, He showed that the sufferings which He was about to undergo were submitted to willingly, and that He died from no lack of power to deliver Himself, but that He gave Himself up and freely surrendered His own will for man's salvation. John xviii. 6.
John xviii. 8,
9.
Gerhard.

••• “Domine Deus, Sanctificator meus, misisti mihi legem Tuam, ut toto corde, tota anima, tota mente, et ex omnibus viribus meis Te diligam: sed nec hoc valeo nisi Tu dederis mihi, cujus est omne donum bonum et omne datum optimum. Jubes Te diligere. Da quod jubes et jube quod vis. Da etiam mihi diligere proximum sicut

meipsum, ut hinc gratiam, et ibi gloriam, consequamur in id ipsum. Da insuper mihi, bone Jesu, ut Te Christum, nobis missum, Deum et hominem corde credam, ore confitear, et opere contester, ut Tibi nunc subjectus sponte Tecum gaudeam sine fine. Amen.”—*Ludolphus*.

THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.¹

ST. MATTHEW IX. 1—8.

Matt. iv. 13.
Mark ii. 1.

(1) *And He entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city.*

Matt. viii. 24.

Isa. vi. 10.

OUR Blessed Lord was leaving the country of the Gergesenes at the request of the inhabitants, for *they besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts*. They entreated the *Light* that He would withdraw, lest they should see with their eyes. Their blindness, however, made no pause in His works of power and mercy. He *passed over*, and left them indeed as they had prayed Him, but only that He might manifest the truth in the eyes of others more ready to receive it than these Gergesenes, and He *came into His own city*, that is, as St. Mark expressly tells us, into Capernaum.² We read of other cities which, for a time at least, are called by this name—*His own*. The city of Jerusalem had been so of old, and it was yet to be His by the sacrifice of Himself, which

¹ “Hodiernum istud Evangelium non solum in seipso magnum et consolatorium est, sed etiam pulchrè ordinatum ad legendum statim sub Evangelium proximè præteritæ Dominicæ. Quod enim tum obscurè et minus intelligibiliter dictum erat, id hoc loco clarè et apertè exponitur. Judaici Pharisæi nolebant aut non poterant intelligere quomodo Christus aut Messias simul Davidis filius et Davidis dominus esse posset. Alterum confitebantur, Eum esse Davidis filium: ad alterum respondere non poterant, quomodo Davidis dominus esse posset. Nos Christiani videmus in hoc Evangelio quomodo et qua ratione Christus Davidis filius et Davidis dominus esse possit. Imò videmus, quod noster adeò dominus, Jesus de

Nazareth, ille Christus et Messias, Davidis filius et dominus sit. Hæc enim utraque apertè in hoc Evangelio declaravit demonstravitque. Tanquam Davidis filius—hoc est, tanquam homo—in navicula advehebatur. Tanquam Davidis dominus—hoc est, tanquam potens Deus—videbat cogitationes hominum, dimittebat peccata, et paralyticum sanabat.”—*Ferus in Dom.*

² “Πόλις ἰδία. Non tantum dicitur urbs in qua quis natus est, sed etiam in qua quis habitat: vid. Raphelius, Obs. Polyb. et Xenoph. ad h. l.; 1 Sam. viii. 22; Ovid. Trist. ii. 414; Senec. Consolat. ad Helv. c. vi.”—*Kuinoel*. “In Romano jure *civitas nostra* dicitur ubi larem fiximus. Capharnaum autem Christum immigrasse jam ante a Mattheo erat proditum.”—*Grotius*.

was to be finished in that city. Bethlehem was the city of David and of our Blessed Lord, since He was born there. Nazareth was *His own city*, since He was brought up and passed His youth there, and remained in it until He was driven from it by the inhabitants. And Capernaum, where this miracle was wrought, was *His own city*, because for a long time He dwelt and taught and did many of His wondrous works there.¹ Whilst even Egypt was sanctified and ennobled as the land of His indwelling, and made *His own* through His flight for refuge there.²

Luke iv. 20—
21.

Ward.
Chrysostom.
Matt. xi. 21.
Corn. & Lap.
Emm. ab
Incarnat.

In these words, *His own city*, we obtain a glimpse of the humiliation of Christ. He was the Creator of all things, the Lord of the whole earth; all cities and countries were His, for He was the Governor of the whole world, and the God and Father of all things living: yet, when for our sakes He straitened Himself by assuming our nature, and laying aside His glory, became incarnate, He then began to have an earthly parent, though the Parent of all, and was for a time a native of Judea and a citizen of Capernaum, though Lord of all the earth. He had narrowed Himself to humanity; He took therefore upon Him all the incidents of that humanity.

Chrysologus.

And, to pass over to Capernaum, we are told that *He entered into a ship*, though at another time we find Him coming to His Apostles by walking on the water. The miracles which He wrought for others, and in order to confirm the faith of those who witnessed them, showed that He needed not the ordinary agents of life. But His was a real humanity. He took our flesh with its weaknesses, and

Matt. xiv. 22.

¹ "He paid tribute at Capernaum as an inhabitant or citizen of the place, which He was entitled to by only dwelling in it twelve months, according to the Jewish canons; where 'tis asked, 'How long shall a man be in a city ere he is as the men of the city?' 'Tis answered, 'Twelve months; but if he purchases a dwelling-house he is as the men of the city immediately, that is, he is a citizen, and obliged to all charges and offices, as they are: though they seem to make a distinction between an inhabitant and a citizen. 'A man is not reckoned as the children of the city, or as one of the citizens, in less than twelve months, but he may be called or accounted as one of the inhabitants of the city if he stays there thirty days.' One or other Christ had done, which

denominated this city to be His, and He to be either an inhabitant or a citizen of it."—*Gill*.

² "Sicut Christus nobilitavit Bethleem Suâ nativitate, Nazareth educatione, Ægyptum Suâ fugâ, Jerusalem Suâ passione; sic Capharnaum decoravit Suâ habitatione, prædicatione, et miraculorum operatione."—*Corn. & Lapide*.

"Not Bethlehem, where He was born, but Capernaum, where He dwelt and preached, is called *His own city*. Thou art not a Christian because thou wast born in a Christian kingdom, and born within the covenant, and born of Christian parents, but because thou hast dwelt in the Christian Church, and performed the duties presented to thee there."—*Donne*.

stooped to our needs in order to give us of His strength. His miracles, indeed, proclaimed His love and mercy to men, but the actions of His life with reference to Himself were all such as became Him who was very man. More especially are the tokens of humanity seen in our Blessed Lord's actions when He is about to display His Divine power. When working a miracle, there is ever something to remind us of the perfectness of His manhood, lest men should forget, as they are ever tempted to do, that He is both God and man.

In the miracle which our Blessed Lord was about to work, in healing the paralytic man, there seems a certain advance over the other miracles of which St. Matthew had just given account. First, He healed the servant of the centurion and the mother of Peter's wife; and then He stilled the tempest. And having thus shown His power over the bodies of men and the forces of inanimate nature, He manifested the like power over the spirits of evil, whom He drove out of the possessed. Here in *His own city*¹ He not only shows His power over the body and the spirit of man, but He especially exhibits His Divine power in the forgiveness of sins,² as well as the power of His humanity in the healing of the body of the sick man.

Gorranus,

In this part of our Blessed Lord's conduct we have several lessons—

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Alex. Nat.

(1) He was leaving the Gergesenes at their own request. He did so lest the doctrines which He taught, and the mighty works which He did, should be the means of hardening their hearts, and adding fresh guilt to the souls of those who had shown themselves unfit to witness His miracles and to receive His teaching. His sensible departure from us may be in real compassion, lest we go on to sin still more by words of blasphemy and by the active rejection of His person.

(2) But though He may depart from those who harden their hearts against Him, and turn away from His call, yet it is but to confirm the faith of those who delight in His

¹ "Spiritualiter civitas Dei Ecclesia est. Quicunque igitur es qui aliqua infirmitate gravaris, et sanari desideras, veni ad Ecclesiam, veni ad civitatem Dei. Ibi illum medicum invenies qui, sicut de Eo scriptum est, omnes languores sanat et omnes infirmitates: ibi invenies illa medicamina, quibus susceptis omnis infirmitas tollitur et omnis ægritudo fugatur: ibi invenies balneum in quo æger, ut lotus fuerit, confestim ab omni infirmitate sanabitur: ibi renovabitur sicut aquilæ juvenus tua,

et in novam creaturam vetera omnia commutabuntur. Illuminantur cæci, curantur paralytici, mundantur leprosi, et mortui suscitantur. Hanc igitur civitatem illa civitas significabat, de qua modò hic dicitur, quia venit Jesus in civitatem Suam; et, ecos, offerebant Ei paralyticum in lecto jacentem."—*Euseb. Emis.*

² "Supra posuit miracula contra pericula corporalia; hic ponit miracula contra pericula spiritualia." — *Th. Aquinas.*

presence. And as He came to the people of Capernaum without any words of invitation, so is He near, so does He come to, every soul which is not actively engaged in resisting Him. Unless, indeed, He first draw us to Himself, we cannot approach Him. It was whilst men were sinners that Christ came and lived and died for them.

Ferus.

John xli. 22.

Rom. v. 6.

(3) As He did with the Gergesenes, so He did with the Jewish nation. He bore long time with them, calling them by the teaching of the law and of the prophets, correcting them by one punishment or another, until in His own person they rejected God, and would not have Him to be their Lord; then, departing from the nation which was His by incarnation, He came to the Gentiles, making them to be His city and people who were not yet a people.

Matt. Faber.

Rom. x. 19.

When the light of the Gospel is darkened in a nation, and, because of the sin of the people the candlestick is removed from the place where it has long been, the light itself is not hidden, the candlestick is not then destroyed; the light is but removed into another place, and shines among another people.

Coster.

One other truth we may learn, the value which Christ sets upon one soul. It was not enough that He preached to the multitudes, that He called all men to Him. He went over the lake of Genesareth, He endured the tempest which overtook the vessel in which He had entered, His disciples were exposed to fear and danger, and all that He might drive Satan from the bodies of those who were possessed. And when He had done this *He entered into a ship and passed over and came again into His own city.*

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

(2) *And, behold, they brought (προσέφερον¹) to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son,² be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*

Matt. viii. 10.
Mark ii. 3.
Luke v. 18.
John v. 14;
ix. 2.

St. Mark and St. Luke give the account of this miracle at greater length than St. Matthew, and in their narrative we learn how great was the faith and charity of those who bore

¹ "Benè dicitur *offerebant*; quia adeò Dominus benignus erat, ut loco gratæ oblationis haberet, quòd infirmi ad Eum adducerentur, ut eis sanitatem largiretur." — *Emman. ab Incarnat.*

² "O mira humilitas! despectum et debilem, totisque membrorum compagibus dissolutum, *filium* vocat; quem

sacerdotes non dignabantur attingere." — *Jeroma.*

"*Confide*, inquit, *filii*; remittuntur tibi peccata tua. Nominat *filium*, — Patrem in curatione hac illi se exhibet. Patris autem est, non quid æger filius cupiat, sed quid ei expediat, providere; et id quidem priùs atque diligentius quod majus est." — *Ludov. Granat.*

the sick man to Christ.¹ They tell us that, unable to come near to Christ because of the crowd which thronged around the doors, they went up upon the roof, and opening it let down the palsied man upon his bed, and thus placed him before the Saviour.

They brought to Him a man sick of the palsy. That is, some of the people of Capernaum, or, as St. Mark tells us, four men by whom his couch was borne. The utter prostration of the man is here shown. He was *sick* and *lying on a bed*, bereft of all power to move; so that the faith of those who bore him, and who trusted to Christ's power to raise him from the bed and restore him to health, was the more remarkable, and the greatness of the miracle itself a cause of greater marvel to the bystanders.²

Jans. Gand.

We read of no prayers, no entreaties on the part of those who bore the sick man that Christ would heal him. The sight of his misery and of their faith in bringing him sufficed, and Christ of His mercy did that which they required but for which we are not told that they asked.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

He saw *their faith*: not merely the outward tokens of their confidence in His love and power, which He saw as man, but as God He pierced through the veil of the body and saw their hearts, and recognised the sincerity of their deep and earnest faith in Him.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

He saw *their faith* (τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν)—

(1) That is, the faith of the bearers as well as that of the sick man, who could give no sign of faith, and who needed not to do so, since it was God who was present to see the heart. For unless the sick man had faith, he would not have permitted his friends to bring him to Christ. But though his infirmity prevented him from speaking, yet his very speechlessness was a most effectual prayer to Christ. His misery was a suppliant to the God of mercy more powerful than his tongue. The desire of the heart is at all times a real prayer, heard and listened to by God. This was the prayer of the paralytic now; hence it is not said that our Blessed Lord heard, but that He saw, the faith of this poor man, and *seeing* it, He answered and rewarded it, though no word was uttered.³

Chrysostom.

Salmeron.

Guilliand.

¹ "Mattheus scripsit Evangelium in Judæa, Marcus in Italia. Inter Judæos autem factum est miraculum illud; ideo Mattheus breviter transit." — *Gorranus*.

² "Particula, *ecce*, significat rem grandem: vel etiam solitudinem eorum, qui cùm audissent quòd Dominus

curaret infirmos, statim paralyticum ad Christum adduxere pro sanitate impetrandâ." — *Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

³ "C'est la vraie marque d'une vive foy, d'avoir le premier recours à Dieu en ses maladies. Et cecy est remarquable en l'Évangile que le Fils de Dieu exaltoit tousjours la foy de

(2) He saw the faith of the bearers, the friends of the sick man, who evidenced their faith by works, so that it was visible to man as well as to God. Their faith was seen by what they did, in uncovering the roof, that they might present the sick man to Christ.¹ They came believing in the power and the love of Christ, and He rewarded their faith by giving them what they sought, the cure of their friend. Would that all sinners, when weighed down by their sins, and unable to move, had those who with like faith would bear them to Christ to be healed of the paralysis of sin. Many are the instances in Holy Scripture of God's answer, given in reply to the faith and prayers of those who have sought His help for others. Hence Christians are bidden to *pray even for them that persecute them*. It was when Moses prayed, and when his hands were lifted up, that the children of Israel prevailed against Amalek. At another time we read of Miriam being healed of her leprosy at the intercession of Moses; and Job's prayer for his friends was answered, not only by an answer to his prayer on their behalf, but *the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before*. So also, in answer to the prayer of the centurion, and in reward of his faith, our Blessed Lord healed the servant.² And of Jerusalem, notwithstanding its sins, we read, *I will defend this city to save it for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake*.

Sylvira.

Boys.
Beigel.Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Matt. v. 44.

Exod. xvii.
11, 12.

Num. xii. 13.

Job xlii. 10.

Matt. viii. 12.
Ferus.
Isa. xxxvii.
35.

Would that those whose duty it is to bear the sick of soul into the presence of Christ, those who declare to others the Gospel of salvation, had faith in Christ as these men had,

ceux qui recouroient à Luy en leurs infirmités. Ainsi Il dit du centenier qui Luy demandoit la guérison de son serviteur, *Non inveni tantam fidem in Israël*; de la Chananée, *Mulier, magna est fides tua*; de la femme qui toucha la frange de Sa robe, *Fides tua te salvam fecit*; et en nostre Évangile de ceux qui Luy presentoient le paralytique, *videns fidem illorum*."—Molinier.

¹ "The houses of Capernaum, as is evident from the ruins, were low, *very low*, with flat roofs reached by a stairway from the yard or court. Those who carried the paralytic ascended to the roof, removed so much of it as was necessary, and let down their patient through the aperture. The whole affair was the extemporaneous device of plain peasants, accustomed to open their roofs,

and let down grain, straw, and other articles, as they still do in the country."

—Dr. Thomson: *The Land and the Book*.

² "Quia auditore, quid hinc faciendum nobis. Nonne ipsorum loco, exemplo centurionis illius, Christum nos adhibemus, precantes: Domine, pueri nostri, fratres nostri, parentes nostri, jacent in domo paralytici et malè torquentur? Nonne imitari nos decet viros illos qui hodiernum paralyticum gestarunt, et quidem, perrupto tecto, dimiserunt ad Christum Dominum? Itemus igitur simul, effringamus cœli tectum nostris orationibus aliisque piis operibus, quò tandem parentes, fratres, et sorores nostras ad conspectum Dei inferre possimus, unaque cum ipsis aliquando æternum sociari."—*Matthew Faber*.

then would there be more healing mercies reaching to sinners, then would the spiritually palsied hear more frequently the words of their Lord, *Son, be of good cheer.*¹

Paulus de
Palacio.

Thy sins be forgiven thee. This appears to be the answer to the faith of the sick man himself. It may be that the disease under which he laboured was the natural consequence of sinful indulgence, or that, by means of the palsy, a sense of his sinfulness and guilt was awakened within him, and that he recognised in his disease the punishment of his sins.² In most other cases of healing we find our Blessed Lord first removing the bodily infirmity, and then that of the soul. The different mode of procedure in this case makes it probable that the desire, the prayer, of the sick man was for spiritual rather than for bodily healing. In other cases the miraculous cure of the body seems to have given full faith in Christ's power and willingness to remove the spiritual diseases. Here, however, it would seem as though faith in Christ's spiritual power, and the longing desire for the forgiveness of sins, had led this palsied man to the Saviour.³

Kuinoel.

Jansen Yp.

Titelmann.

Trench.

But whether the desire of the sick man might have led to this act of Christ's forgiving power or not, one fact is evident: Christ, by the forgiveness of the sick man's sins, gave to the Scribes and Pharisees, who were present, full proof of His Divinity. They confessed that no one could forgive sins but God alone. Christ forgave the sins of this man, and attested this fact by working the visible miracle upon his body, by raising him from the bed to which he was hopelessly bound.⁴

Tostatus.

By forgiving the sins of this man He taught the paralytic, and through him still teaches us—

(1) The greater importance of the spirit over the body, and the greater need in man of spiritual than of bodily health.⁵

¹ "O utinam tam efficacem, perfectam et integram haberent prædicatores fidem: ut eam Christus aspiciens, diligens, et probans, diceret populo, *confide.*"—*Paulus de Palacio.*

² The Jews regarded disease as the punishment of sin. They said, "There are no chastisements without sin" (Talm. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1. Midrash Hobelet, fol. 70. 4. Tzeror Hammor, fol. 99. 1). See St. John ix. 2.

³ "Disease was the one effect of all sin, and the particular punishments of some sins among the Jews. Comp. Deut. xxviii. 21, 22, 27, 60, on the diseases which disobedience should entail on the Israelites. Comp. also

Isa. xxxiii. 24: 'The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity;' also Numb. v. ; 1 Cor. v. 5. In saying *thy sins be forgiven thee*, Christ gave assurance that the disease should be healed, and pointed out the origin of it, and of scourges generally. Comp. Rev. xxi. 4: 'There shall be no more death . . . neither shall there be any more pain.'"—*Keble, Studia Sacra*, p. 296.

⁴ "Thus he declared: 1. His own power as Christ; 2. the doctrine of Justification."—*Keble.*

⁵ "Ut cum medicis ad infirmos vocari contigerit, ipsos ante omnia moneant et inducant, ut medicos advo-

(2) That as, at the first, disease and death entered into the world because of sin, so, as to individual sickness, sin is oftentimes the cause, sent in mercy, not in anger—since bodily diseases are the scourges of Almighty love—by which He would wean us from the sin which has ensnared us. Like a wise physician, then, our Blessed Lord removed the cause of the bodily evil before he proceeded to cure the disease itself. Matt. Faber.

Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

God is not the Father of the just only, but also of sinners, for they are His creatures. Hence we find one who had need of the forgiveness of sins, who was still *in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*, addressed by our Blessed Lord by this name of *son*.¹ So in the Lord's Prayer we are bidden to call God *Father*, though at the same time we are directed to pray to Him for the forgiveness of our trespasses. God is the Father of all men, of the sinner as well as of the righteous, since both are men. Christ reminds us of this, not that we should remain in our sins, but that He might point us to One—our Father—who loves us with a father's love, and is ready to forgive and to put away our sins. He tells us that we are children, in order that, as children, we should obey Him and flee from sin. The prodigal son is still His son, however far he may have departed from his Father's home. Whilst, then, the penitent is the son of God by adoption in Christ, still every man is a son of God by creation, and shares in his Father's love. He it is who hath chosen us, it is not we who chose Him; and because we are already His we are able to come to Him. Theophylact.
Acts viii. 23.

Hofmeister.
Guilliaud.
Luke xv. 24.

Luca Brug.
John xv. 16.
Paulus de
Palacio.

cent animarum, ut postquam infirmis fuerit de spirituali salute provisum, ad corporalis medicinæ remedium salubrius procedatur, cum causâ cessante cesset effectus."—*Concil. Lateranense*, Can. xii.

¹ "Lucas ait Christum dixisse, *Homo, remittuntur peccata tua* [Luc. v. 29]. Certè filium et hominem verè dixit. Inaudita enim mansuetudine *filium* vocat. Et, ut tacitè Scribis et Phariseis supercilium et arrogantiam exprobrat, *hominem* dicit—id est, peccatorem: et talem depingit, dicens, *peccata tua*, ut fidem et animum ipsius excitet ad agnoscendum Se, utraque sui portione calamitosum, atque hac methodo peccatorum pœnitentia correpta, remissio et gratia præstò sint. Quasi dicat: Homo es; ergo

peccator, qui opus habes remissione peccatorum. Rogabis, Si peccator est, quomodo dicitur filius Christi, qui est summa justitia? Quòd si peccator est filius Christi, ergo Christus est Pater peccatorum. Jam per quem ista concordabunt? Profectò legisperitus, philosophus, aut quivis alius, sola ductus humana ratione et philosophia, iudicabit hoc impossibile; sed fidelis dicet nihil esse verius. Quandoquidem Deus Pater est peccatorum curandorum. Quemadmodum enim filius medici est ægrotus, cum tamen medicus sit sanus: ita et Christus, cœlestis medicus, Pater est peccatorum, sed curandorum. Hæc suavissimam peccatoribus remissionem peccatorum sitientibus afferunt consolationem."—*Guilliaud*.

When the Saviour thus bids the paralytic man *be of good cheer*, this was no mere word of command. What He bids any of us do He gives us power to accomplish. With His word strength was given to the soul to confide in Him, and to *be of good cheer*, as much as afterwards power was given to the palsied body to *rise and walk*.¹

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Son. He whose *sins* are *forgiven* is recognised as God's son, and admitted to the privileges of His children; and in speaking to this sinning and afflicted man with this endearing word Christ teaches us all, but especially those who have the care of souls, to be loving and merciful to the sick and poor, and especially to the erring children of our common

Topiarus.

Father.²

2 Sam. xli. 13.

Grotius.

Thy sins be forgiven thee. This is not a mere declaration, like that of Nathan to David, that another had forgiven his sins. It is the voice of power putting away sin by His own Almighty word. In this way the absolution of Christ differs from that of His ministers, since they can but declare the absolution which another gives. The absolution of Christ differs also from that of the Church in another respect. Christ had not only the power of absolving all sinners, but He possesses the sure knowledge of the reality of the sinner's repentance: the command to absolve He has given to His ministers to exercise, but He has nowhere promised to impart to them the power to discern the heart.

Estius.

Bonaventura.

The paralytic man is a type of the human race suffering under the consequences of sin, robbed of all health of mind, enfeebled as to the powers of the soul, unable to live aright, or to do those things which are fitting to man's nature, and which he was intended to do, and hence unable to obey God or to come to God.³ Sin robs man of the strength to stand

¹ Conformiter ad placitum Chrysostomi dicendum est Dominus in illis verbis, *Confide fili*, non fidem novam ab hoc infirmo requirere sed perseverantiam, aut etiam augmentum in eâ, quam jam habebat."—*Emm. ab Incarn.*

² "*Fili*, inquit, Bonus ad omnes Deus: in peccantes præcipue Suam ostendit longanimitatem et mansuetudinem; verax verbum hinc sumitur: Gravis atque severus justis ubique videtur Deus, peccatoribus comis, pius, ac blandus, atque ad clementiam velox. Peccantem cadentem relevat, et inquit ad eum, *Nunquid cadens non adjiciet ut resurgat? aut aversus non revertetur?* Jer. viii. 4. Et iterum Zach. i. 3: *Convertimini ad Me, et Ego convertar*

ad vos. Item Ezek. xviii. 23: *Vivo Ego, dicit Dominus, Nolo mortem peccatoris, sed potius ut convertatur et vivat.*"—*Topiarus.*

³ "Quod paralysis in corpore acedia est in anima, quum ita enervat ut impotens sit homo se erigere ad virtutem ad cælum, ad Deum ait Cornelius in c. 10 Matt. . . Representat proinde paralyticus hodiernus omnes tepidos torpentesque in Dei servitio. . . Si dicerem nullum podagricum posse venire ad cælum, paradoxum viderer proloqui et tamen ipsissima veritas est. Exclusi sunt spe cœli, quibus voluntaria paralysis in pedibus animæ, hoc est, affectibus hæret: 'O Infelix anima, exclamat Richardus à S. Vict. orat. de

in the midst of temptations, and renders him utterly unable to walk in a consistent course. Deprived of the power which his nature at the first possessed, he is wholly unable to approach his Maker without help. He must be borne into the presence of God, and borne by the hands of one of like nature to himself. For this end Christ took our nature, that He might lift us to God, and that He might restore strength to our enfeebled natures.¹

Alex. Nat.

We read elsewhere of the difficulty which the friends of the sick man had in bringing him to Christ. The crowd around hindered the approach to the Saviour, so that his friends had to take off part of the roof,² and to let him down into the midst of the assembled crowd, in order that he might be placed before Christ. The crowd and cares of the world interpose now their obstacles. The evil example of many who profess the faith of Christ presents a stumbling-block. Oftentimes those seated with Christ, the ministers of His Church, like the sons of Eli of old, make men abhor the offering of the Lord. As with the children of Israel in their journey to the Promised Land, so with Christians now. The Israelites were not led into Canaan without having to overcome many a hindrance—the desert at one time, hosts of enemies at another: so is it with us. If we would come to Christ, we must show the same zeal as these men who bore the paralytic man, the same earnestness as Zaccheus, even if we

Mark ii. 4.
Luke v. 19.

1 Sam. ii. 17.

Luke xix 4.

exterminazione mali, quæ in via virtutis non anhelas currere, quia nisi curras, non apprehendes bravium.' Ad cœlum non sufficit via, sed currere, *Sic currite ut comprehendatis*, monet apostolus, 1 Cor. ix. 24."—*Hartung*.

¹ "God's justification of a sinner is not merely a word spoken *about* a man, but a word spoken *to* and *in* him; not an act of God *immanent* in Himself, but *transitive* upon the sinner."—*Trench on the Miracles*.

² "If the houses of Capernaum were built like most of the houses of the present day in the towns of Palestine, the uncovering of the roof admits of an easy explanation. The inner court of the house is usually more spacious than any of the surrounding rooms, and often there are platforms or benches of stone on each side, spread with carpets and cushions, used as divans during the day and as sleeping places at night. To such a court Christ may have retreated when the

crowd increased. We may imagine Him there, with the wondering people round Him, and the crafty and scornful Scribes seated near on the divan—all sheltered from the hot sun by some kind of matting or canvas, supported on a trellis-work of tree-branches and planks, more or less secure. When the sick man was carried by his friends to the house where Christ was preaching, 'they could not come nigh to Him for the press,' so they very naturally went on to the terrace or house-top, and '*uncovered the roof*' of the court—that is, they removed the matting which sheltered it, and then they '*broke up*' the trellis-work and let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. If an ordinary house-top had been broken up, the wooden beams, and the masses of earth and stone of which it is composed, would in falling have endangered the lives of those below."—*Domestic Life in Palestine*.

have to rise above the crowd, and climb the tree or the roof in order to come to Him.

We may each one of us learn a lesson from the way in which the bearers of the sick man overcame the hindrances which prevented their coming to Christ. Men are hindered in their Christian life—

Paulus de
Palacio.

(1) By nominal worshippers, those who enter not into the house by a lively faith in Christ, and who by their deadness of faith and unbelief prevent others from entering in.¹

(2) By the crowd about the doors, the cares of life and worldly occupation, which engross so much the thoughts and fill so much the heart of man that he cannot come near to his Saviour.

Ezek. xl. 22,
25, 29, 33,
&c.

Avendaño.

(3) Home cares, domestic anxieties or pleasures, the ease and comfort of life, oftentimes occupy the whole soul, and prevent our lifting up our hearts to Christ. We must tear ourselves from these by uncovering the roof, by getting glimpses of heaven through meditation and more earnest prayer, which will bring us into the presence of our Father. The temple of God, as seen in vision by the prophet, was full of windows, through which heaven could be seen by the worshippers. In the temple of God, our own selves, we must also see that there are these windows, through which the light and the glory of our Father may stream into our souls, and by which we may ever be conscious of His presence.²

Job xlv. 4.
Isa. xliii. 25;
xlv. 22.

(3) *And, behold, certain of the Scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.*

Behold a marvel! not convinced by this miracle and by the manifestation of His power to heal, certain of the Scribes,

¹ "Ad januam hujus domus sive ecclesiæ multa turba est, tum infidelium, tum etiam eorum fidelium, qui ad spiritum gustandum, qui interior est, nondum intraverunt. Fœlix enim illa est anima, quam sponsus Christus introduxit in cellam vinarium: quæ non ad januam est, sed intra domum. At quia angusta porta est, ideo turba non intrat."—*Paulus de Palacio.*

² "Cum omnes mortales in servitio Darii regis occuparentur, ita ut nullus Dei reminisceretur, sed ad regem etiam pro salute petenda adirent, tunc Daniel fenestras in domo sua aperuit, per quas ter adorabat Dominum versùs Jerusalem, ne occlusa domus Dei luce non perfrueretur. [Dan. vi. 10.] Cum

Dominus Noe cum filiis et uxoribus filiorum et tot animalibus in arcam occlusit, et clausit à foris ostium, fenestram nihilominus in superioribus arcæ aperuit, per quam lumen cœli possent aspicere. [Gen. vi. 16.] Quoniam quantumvis filiis, filiabus, nuribus, generis, famulis intra domum tuam includaris, ita quòd ex omni parte à foris videaris occlusus, ut nullum aliis rebus intendere valeas; superiori tamen parte domus tuæ fenestram apertam habeas; hoc est, ascende animæ tuæ tecta, ibique dividens curas, et à te aliquando abiciens, cœlum ac cœlestia circumspecte et tracta, ne tantis curis summergaris, sed cum arca super undas tamen securus traharis."—*Avendaño.*

not venturing, however, openly to condemn Him, *said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.*

Some of the Scribes and Pharisees seem at least to have viewed this miracle with respect; *certain*, however, of them *said within themselves*—not openly, but, as another Evangelist tells us, *reasoning in their hearts*. Even amongst the most inveterate foes of Christ some were found who confessed His power. And for this reason it may be, and because of the evident miracle which He had wrought, these men whose hearts were still hardened against Him did not venture to accuse Him openly, but only *said within themselves*. Mark ii. 6.
Emm. ab Incarnat.
Konigsteyn.

The one and invincible error of the Jewish nation respecting our Blessed Lord, and more especially the master-error of the Scribes and Pharisees, was this, that He was mere man.¹ They, indeed, had no other thought of the Messiah than that He would be a man like David, His predecessor. They would not acknowledge to themselves—they were blind to the fact—that the predictions of the prophets, and the characteristics of the promised Messiah, could not be fulfilled by one who was only man. When, then, the Messiah claimed the power of forgiving sins, they naturally, reasoning from their misconception, accused Him of blasphemy.² They knew the declaration of God—*I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions*: they knew, therefore, that to blot out sins was the prerogative of God. Their blindness, however, hindered them from seeing that Christ was more than man. Corn. & Lap.
Isa. xliii. 25.
Jerome.

They reasoned in this manner: Only God can forgive sins; *this man* claims to forgive sins; therefore he is a blasphemer. Whereas they should have argued: Only God can forgive sins; *this man* declares that he can forgive sins; therefore he asserts that he is God. That their reasoning that only God could forgive sins was right is evident from the words of our Blessed Lord. He confirms this, not removing the impression, but strengthening it; and then proceeds to show that He is God, and therefore that He has the power of forgiving sins. So when, at another time, they made the same accusation against Him, that His claim to be equal with God was blasphemy for man to utter, He does not tell them that they have mistaken His claim, but rather that His works prove that He is not mere man, but one with the Father. Ward.
John x. 38—38.
Matt. xxvi. 64.
Chrysostom.

¹ "Videbant hominem et non videbant Deum: solius autem Dei est dimittere peccata: ideo dicebant Eum blasphemum."—*Th. Aquinas.*

² "Οὗτος βλασφημεῖ. — Impiorum

consuetudo est Dei pretendere zelum, ut hac pietatis larvâ suæ malevolentiae venenum impune evomant."—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione.*

Blasphemy consists—

(1) In attributing to God defects unworthy of Him, such as want of knowledge or of wisdom.

(2) In denying to God the attributes which are worthy of Him.

Gorranus,
Bengel.

(3) In attributing to any one except God, or in claiming for ourselves, the incommunicable attributes and prerogatives of God.

Coster.

(4) In treating the words and appointments of God, holy things, and holy places, with scorn.

Boys.

We find that our Blessed Lord did good to this paralytic man, undeterred by the knowledge that the Scribes and Pharisees would cavil at His actions. In this He taught us to obey His commands and to do good, although we have reason to fear that our good deeds may be evil spoken of and attributed to an unworthy motive.¹

Ps. cxxxix. 2.
Matt. xii. 25.
Mark xii. 15.
Luke v. 22;
vi. 8; ix. 47;
xi. 17.
Mark ii. 8.

(4) *And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?*

Salmeron.

St. Mark adds, that He knew this by *His Spirit*,—not, that is, as a prophet might have done, by the spirit of another, by a revelation from on high, but *by His own Spirit*, in which was the knowledge of all men, for He *needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man*.

John ii. 25.

Luca Brug.

Our Blessed Lord throughout the whole of His ministry answered the cavils and unbelief of those who denied His mission and Divinity, not by words and assertions, but by appeals to Scripture and by His deeds, since these were more convincing than any assertion could be. Thus, at one time He appeals to the Old Testament Scripture: *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?* At another time He points to the proof afforded by His deeds, *If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.*

John v. 46,
47.

John x. 37,
38.

He who had seen the faith of the paralytic man, though

¹ “Il ne faut jamais que la mauvaise disposition de certaines personnes nous empêche de satisfaire à des devoirs de justice et de charité. Ce paralytique désirant avec ardeur la rémission de ses péchés, et l'ayant méritée par sa pénitence intérieure, que Jésus-

Christ voyait dans son cœur, il ne devait pas être privé de la consolation qu'il reçut par ces paroles, *Vos péchés vous sont remis*, à cause de la mauvaise disposition des Pharisiens.” — *Nicolas sur les Évangiles.*

unable through weakness to give any outward signs of the faith within, showed that He was one “unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid,” by his knowledge of the thoughts which filled the hearts of the Scribes and Pharisees. They accused Him of blasphemy in forgiving sins, since God alone can do so. He proves Himself God by revealing the thoughts which were in their hearts. That He did not blaspheme, and that He was what He claimed to be, very God, equal to the Father, He showed them—

Collect in
Communion
Service.
Stier.

Chrysostom.

(1) By confirming the truth of His own words, *thy sins be forgiven thee*; thus proving that He was God.

(2) By showing that He knew the thoughts and intents of the heart, which none could do save God alone.

(3) By healing the paralytic man, and giving him strength to rise from his bed in the presence of all men, which no mere man could do.

Alex. Nat.

There ought to have been no longer any room for doubt in their minds as to the mission of the Saviour:¹ He proved that He was no deceiver, no mere prophet; that He was more than man. His knowledge of their unspoken thoughts, and the miracles that He wrought, abundantly proved the truth of His claims. Had He been a prophet, possessing like other prophets power from on high to work miracles, still, in this case, the miracle which our Blessed Lord worked was done in attestation of His being one who had power to forgive sins, of His being very God: and this power it were blasphemy to suppose would have been given from heaven in support of a claim to be that which He was not—the Son of God, the very and eternal God.

1 Sam. xvi. 7.
1 Kings viii.
39.

Corn. & Lap.

(5) *For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?*

The thought in the minds of the Scribes and Pharisees seems to have been this: It is easy to say *thy sins be forgiven thee*, because it is impossible to prove that this has taken place; for that of which none on earth can be cognisant, every one can equally assert or deny. Christ answers

Barradius.

Corn. & Lap.

¹ “Καὶ ἰδὼν Ἰησοῦς τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις αὐτῶν. Et cum vidisset Jesus cogitationes eorum. Erat id inter notas Messiae, ut contra Barchochebam observant Thalmudici titulo De Synedrio.”—Grotius. “Plus est videre cogitationes quam cognoscere, cum cognoscamus etiam cogitationes aliquorum ipsis

nobis revelantibus. . . . Observandum quomodo semper Dominus aliorum malitia in bonum aliquod utitur. Quod enim imprimis apertè dicere non conveniebat, id jam, occasione cogitationum talium, commodum erat ostendere et evidens facere.”—Jansen Gand.

Menochius.

the objection of these men, that though He was unable to heal the sick, yet that He claimed the greater power of forgiving sins, the truth of which claim none could test. To show that He possessed the power which He claimed, He gave a sign which all might see, and by which all might test the reality of His claim to be more than man.¹

Matt. Faber.

Arias Montanus.

Whatever answer might be given to this question of Christ, the truth of His words, the assertion of His Divinity, would be equally evident. If they answer that both these are beyond ordinary means or the power of man to accomplish, then in effect our Blessed Lord says: "Since I do that which is equally difficult with the forgiveness of sins, since I heal the body, you cannot rightly question My power to do the other." If they answer that the claim to forgive sins is easier, but that the other sign had not been done because of its greater difficulty, and of the ease with which it would be detected, then, in working that which was beyond human means, they acknowledged in Him a power more than human, the very power which could forgive sins.

Corn. à Lap.

Chemnitz.

Let it be noted that the question is not which is easier to do, but which is easier *to say*. They denied that anything was done, and declared that it was an empty claim on Christ's part. He, then, did that which was harder than merely to claim any power, however great; He worked a miracle in their sight—one which they could examine, and about which they could satisfy themselves.²

Salmeron.

The power to forgive sins is, indeed, of greater excellency and dignity than any other power, because it is a power exerted over and benefiting the soul, which is greater in dignity than the body. But the power exerted in the one case is not greater than that exerted in the other. Both are Divine, both beyond the power of man. The greatness consists not in the power made use of, but in the superiority of the soul, on which the miracle of healing is exercised.

(6) *But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He*

¹ "A visibili signo probat suam invisibilem potestatem."—*Enm. ab Incarnatione.*

² "Magnitudo autem miraculi, vel modus faciendi, cum imperio et in momento, simpliciter non probant Christum esse Deum, quia potest dici quòd homo sic operans Deo sit magis acceptus, juxta illud: *Qui credit in*

Me, opera quæ Ego facio et ipse faciet, et majora horum faciet. Operari tamen illa ad confirmationem hujus assertionis, Ego Deus sum, et habeo potestatem remittendi peccata, maximè probat Christum esse Deum; quia Deus etiam minimo signo non attestatur mendacio."—*Salmeron.*

to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

That ye may know, not by My testimony, not from My words, but by a sign visible to all. He was about to give a material sign, in order that He might prove to them the reality of the spiritual blessing, as He ever does in the sacraments of the Church.¹ Both His acts of mercy to the paralytic man were proofs of His Divine nature; yet because the one was invisible which He wrought on the spirit, and the other on the body was visible to them all, by the visible He proved the reality of the invisible. So that, when the Scribes and Pharisees as well as the multitude saw the diseased body of the man restored whole at the word of Christ, they could no longer doubt His power nor question the invisible operation of God upon the spirit, working forgiveness and restoring the man to holiness.

Jerome.

Bruno
Astensis.

Both these miracles of healing, that upon the spirit of the man as well as that on his body, were wrought by the inherent power of Christ. He says, not that *the Son of Man hath power* from God, or that He hath received a commandment to declare these mercies, but He says that He hath this power even as man absolutely of Himself.²

Guilland.

The Son of Man. Our Saviour here seems to demonstrate His Divinity. Of the perfect humanity in the person of Jesus Christ there was no question with these cavillers. It is the *Son of Man* who does this, who forgives the sins of the paralytic man as well as heals his body. But none save God could do this; none but God had such power; therefore the *Son of Man* is God.³ The blessings which man derives from the incarnation of the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity flow through the human nature of Christ. None but God could remit sin, yet His doing so was by virtue of the manhood which was taken into union

Athanasius,
cont. Arian,
iii. 4.

Corn. & Lap.

¹ “*Ut autem sciatis, etc., dupliciter potest legi: vel ut sint verba Evangelistæ, et ita fuit narratoria: vel sint verba Christi dicentis, ut sciatis, etc., et sic oratio est imperfecta, quia ipsi dubitabant. Ideo ut sciatis quia ego habeo potestatem dimittendi peccata: ait paralytico: Surge, etc. Unde verbo curavit; quod proprium est Dei, juxta illud, Psal. xxxiii. 9, Dixit et facta sunt.*”—*Th. Aquinas.*

Tunc ait paralytico. Hæc verba, quæ à Syriaco et à multis patribus per parenthesis leguntur sunt interposita

ab Evangelista ad melius insinuandum rem gestam.”—*Emm. ab Incarnatione.*

² “*Habet potestatem non ministerialem, sicut sacerdotes novæ legis, sed authoritativam et principalem per sua excellentissima opera acquisitam; et ut quatenus homo; nam quæ Deus eam habebat ut sibi connaturaliter ingentam.*”—*Emm. ab Incarnatione.*

³ “It was the manhood that pronounced, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*: the Almighty was He that forgave them.”—*Dr. Gardyner.*

Salmeron.

with the Godhead. This was the channel of healing to man: the means through which the mercies of God were made available to his salvation. There seems, therefore, to be a special emphasis on these words. As on other similar occasions, our Blessed Lord appears, when about to exert that power by which men should be compelled to acknowledge the presence of Divinity, to have used this name, lest they should forget the fact of His perfect humanity. In calling Himself, then, the Son of Man, He shows us—

(1) That He who did these miracles was one in person; that He who, as God, forgave sins, was yet, at the same time and for ever, *the Son of Man*.

Tostatus.

1 Cor. xv. 45.

(2) That the humanity which had been united inseparably with the nature of God was invested with the prerogative of Godhead, and that the Second Adam was, indeed, a *quickening spirit*.

Barradius.

But our Blessed Lord not only points to the healing mercies which come from Him as *the Son of Man*; the *power* which He manifested was done *upon earth*. In these words He teaches us—

Wealey.

(1) That the Son of Man had this power even whilst He was upon earth, and in His state of humiliation. And if so, let us for our confidence remember, how much more when He has ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of power.

Chemnitz.

Theophylact.
Gorranus.
Royard.
Bengel.

John vi. 33.

(2) That the *earth* is the only place where sins can be forgiven; that unless they are remitted in this life, they must cling to man for ever. These words savour of a heavenly origin; they seem to be spoken by One who came *down from heaven*, and who has not yet ascended into His glory.

Tostatus.

(3) In these words is also contained a promise to all sinners who repent of their sins, that so long as they are upon the earth they may find mercy and forgiveness from the Son of Man.¹

Theophylact.

Haymo.

Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. Our Blessed Lord not only healed this paralytic man, but He commanded him to take up his bed in attestation of the reality and completeness of the miracle; that as his bed had been in time past the sign of his infirmity, so now it should be the proof of his having been made whole. As our being tied and bound by the chain of our sins is a sign of our

¹ “Missus fuit à Patre in mundum, ut salvaretur mundus per Ipsum, quod fieri nequaquam posset, nisi hominibus peccata dimitteret. Si ergo discipulos suos misit in mundum universum,

sicut Ipse fuerat missus à Patre, constat Ipsum peccati dimittendi potestatem illis contradidisse. Alioqui non sic eos misisset, sicut fuerat Ipse missus à Patre.”—*Royard*.

spiritual death, so is the conquest over sin and resistance to temptation the witness of our having risen from the dead. Christ sent this man whom He had healed to his house in order that those who had known of his infirmity and helplessness might be witnesses also of the healing effected by the word of Christ, and that he might be a constant monument of the truth that Christ, the Messiah, had come unto men. By sending him to his house our Blessed Lord seemed to say, "I desire to heal all who are diseased in mind, all who are paralysed by unbelief; but since these will not come that they may be healed, that they may believe because of the works which I do, depart thou and declare, by thy presence amongst them, that the Healer is indeed come." God would have us manifest His power in the same place where of old we showed forth our subjection to Satan.

Chrysostom.

He sent the man away when He had healed him, and did not bid him follow Him. On this, note—

(1) That Christ never permitted any one to be His Apostle whom He had healed of any disease, or from whom He had driven out the devil, nor, again, whom He had raised from the dead, lest, it may be, any should say that the miracles were not real, but were pretended to be wrought on one who, as a follower of Christ, was ready to proclaim a fictitious miracle for the credit of his Master.

(2) That though He had healed men, yet that He had done so in order to swell the number of His disciples, and not as the effect of His love and sympathy for man.

Salmeron.

(3) He showed us in this the perfect freedom of will which remained in those whom He had raised from sickness or death. These were sent to their own homes, bidden, indeed, by the remembrance of past mercies to sin no more, but not insured by any special nearness to Him of security against fresh temptation and danger.

Sylveira.

But as in the paralytic man, unable to move any of his limbs aright, we have a type of human nature when lying under the dominion of sin, so in the command of our Saviour we have spiritual lessons and spiritual directions for every sinner. He calls each one of us to depart from the pleasures of sin and from the enthralling delight of fleshly lusts which bind us, as this sick man, to a bed of languishing. He bids us rule that body which has hitherto enslaved us, and to rise in that strength which He gives us, and to walk from henceforth in the paths of His commandments.¹ These injunctions, then, are given to every sinner—

Augustine.

¹ "Lectum tollere est carnem à carnalibus desideriis ad voluntatem Spiritus

Sylveira.

(1) *Arise.* Lift up thyself from the earth, to which all thy inclinations bind thee. Lift up thyself to God, by tearing thyself from the grovelling pleasures of sense. He has promised forgiveness of sins to all who repent, and the reality of that forgiveness is evidenced to thyself and to others by the power which thou hast of fulfilling this command and rising from the earth.

(2) *Take up thy bed.* Thou hast been weighed down to the earth and bound by the fetters of evil passions and of earthly lusts. Thy body has been allowed to rule thee as thy master. Be thou henceforth the master of that which has hitherto enslaved thee. Bear that which has in past time borne thee.

Nicole.

(3) *Go unto thine house.*¹ Leave the pursuit and the worship of things without; things which are not fitted to give rest to thee. Go unto thy heart, listen there to God's call, be watchful over all thy actions, and do that which becometh one whose home is not this earth.²

Royard.

This is a solemn call to the penitent to labour to undo the evil of which, in past time, he has been the cause. Our Blessed Lord seems to say, When thou wert walking in sin, others helped thee to Christ. Now show the signs of the reality of thy repentance by bearing and leading to Christ others, of whose sins thou wast formerly a partaker.

Sylveira.

Arise now from the death of sin, that so thou mayest without shame *take up thy bed*, this body, at the general resurrection,—for it will be the same bed, the same body, which now thou hast,—and *go unto thine house*, the place of many mansions, which Christ has prepared for thee.³

Mark ii. 3.
Luke v. 25.

(7) *And he arose, and departed to his house.*

As of old *He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and*

attollere: ut quod fuit testimonium infirmitatis sit probatio sanitatis. Tolle ergo lectum tuum—id est, carnem—per continentiam: spe cœlestium à terris segrega."—*Ant. Patav.*

¹ "Unde Apostolus: Surge, inquit, qui dormis, et exsurge a mortuis, et illuminabit te Christus. [Ephes. v. 14.] Surge, tolle lectum tuum; habes potestatem in carne tua: dominare corpori tuo; tu porta, tu rege, tu dirige; tibi serviat, tibi obediat, tibi-que amodo per omnia subjiciatur. Et vade in domum tuam: revertere in patriam tuam; reduc in patriam, carnem tuam, quia ipsa te ejecit de patria

tua."—*Bruno Astensis.*

² "Que de peuples dans le monde, que leurs péchés, leur corruption, leur égoïsme inerte et lâche ont paralysé! Quand se lèveront-ils à la voix de Jésus, pour s'en retourner dans leur maison, pour rentrer dans une demeure qui soit à eux?"—*Lemennais.*

³ "Après avoir été délivrés de nos maux, nous devons marcher avec ferveur vers notre maison, qui est le paradis. Il faut employer nos forces, nos pensées, pour y arriver. Regrettons tous les jours et tous les momens employés dans des desseins contraires."—*Medaille, Médit. sur les Évangiles.*

immediately *it stood fast*; so now, no sooner does Christ speak, than the man is restored from his sickness. There is no interval between the will of Christ and the deed which He wills to be done. St. Mark and St. Luke add *immediately*, thus showing the instantaneous effect of Christ's words upon the paralytic man. They add also, that he *went forth before them all, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God*; that is, *before* all those who had accused the Great Healer of *blasphemy*, and also before all those who had listened with reverence to His words.

Pa. xxxiii. 9.
Wicellus.

Sylvestra.
Mark ii. 12.
Luke v. 25.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Our Blessed Lord, in forgiving the sins of the soul, and in healing at the same time the body, of the paralytic man, teaches us that He is the Lord and Redeemer both of the body and spirit of every one. He raised the man at once from the palsy of body and spirit; and in the real strength which He imparted to the useless members of the body He teaches us that, when He heals the soul by the forgiveness of sins, it is no figurative healing which He gives, but a very real power.

Chrysostom.

In the action of the man who was healed we have convincing evidence of perfect soundness instantaneously imparted. What Christ bestows, He gives with a full hand and in unstinted measure. When He condescends to attest His power in the sight of men, He will have it worthily esteemed and magnified. We, indeed, are called upon to magnify His name and to praise His power more than the multitude who witnessed this miracle. They, most probably, glorified God for the lesser mercy, the healing of the body: we are daily called upon to glorify Him for the redemption of the world and for the forgiveness of sins.

Stier.

By this miracle, then, Christ taught us these two truths:—

(1) That in His miracles of mercy to the bodies of men He gives perfect restoration of health, and imparts real strength to that which had before been enfeebled by disease.

(2) That this forgiveness of sins, of which the healing of the body is an outward sign, is followed by as real consequences as in the other miracle. That it is no mere imputation of righteousness, no mere covering of sin, which then takes place, but that He infuses strength to obey His commands and imparts a real holiness to the spirit of the sinner, so that he has power not only to break away from the slavery of sin, but to go to *his house* and to live as a child under the eye and in the service of his Father.¹

Matt. Faber.

¹ "Discamus ab hoc paralytico non solum credere, sed etiam à peccatis resurgere et in via mandatorum Dei ambulare, nec unquam quiescere, donec ad domum nostram et veram patriam accedamus. Non satis est ei credere;

Origen.
Augustine.

Matt. viii. 6.

John v. 1—9.

Ludolph.

As paralysis is a type of the state of the sinner, powerless through sin, more especially through indulgence in sensual lusts, so do the three instances in which our Blessed Lord is recorded to have cured this disease typify three several stages in sin. He cured the servant lying *sick of the palsy* in his master's house. He healed another who was lying *impotent* at the pool of Bethesda. And here He raises one lying helpless in his bed. In this He teaches us not only that He is able to save, but He shows us the unlimited way in which that power is exerted: that He does cure the soul palsied in the house, and impotent through secret sins. And not only so, but that He can, and is ready to, speak the word and to heal the open and notorious sinner, whose wickedness is proclaimed aloud by the whole world, as of old He healed the man lying by the pool of Bethesda. And yet more than even this: that as He healed the man wholly deprived of strength and bound to his bed of sickness, so that he needed to be brought to Him by others, so will He listen to the prayers of others offered up in behalf of the sinner, and will forgive and impart fresh spiritual strength to the penitent who mourns over long habits of sin and years of helplessness and estrangement from his God.

Verse 33.

(8) *But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.*

Th. Aquinas.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Cajetan.

Hur6.

Jansen Yp.

Bengel.

We read nothing of the effect of this miracle upon the hearts of the Scribes and Pharisees—probably there was nothing good to tell of them—they still murmured against Him; but of *the multitudes* it is said, as though in contradistinction to these others, we read that *they marvelled*; whilst, in contrast to those who conceived evil in their hearts against Christ, we read that these openly *glorified God*. That which is an object of scandal to those who are hardened by submission to the fashions and entangled by the prejudices of the world, is oftentimes the very cause of comfort and of rejoicing to the simple in heart.

The multitudes glorified God, because He had given such power unto men. They saw only in the Saviour a man in whom they recognised the power of God working, and they praised God that He had bestowed such gifts on this man, one of the common race of *men*, and had given power to Him for the benefit of all *men* who were suffering from disease and sin.¹ There seems only in these *multitudes* an

sed opus est surgere, ambulare, et obedire."—Stella, Comment. in Lucam.
laborare, et omnibus suis præceptis ¹ "Quia dicitur hominibus, ideo

acknowledgment that the man who did such mighty deeds was enabled to do them by the power of God given to Him for that special purpose.¹

Here some may ask why Christ did not on this occasion say distinctly, I am God. It may be answered that His mighty works proclaimed this truth more effectually than words could do. But, again, in the state of heart of the Jewish people, and especially of the Scribes and Pharisees, this were but to add a fresh stumbling-block, and to tempt them to deeper sin. They could not comprehend how He who confessedly was man could yet be God. That which the prophets taught, their glosses on Scripture and their prejudices hindered them from seeing. When He asserted His Divinity on other occasions, we find that this was to His hearers but the occasion of indignation and fresh sin. When he declared, *Before Abraham was, I am*, thus distinctly asserting His pre-existence before His incarnation, we read, *Then took they up stones to cast at Him*. When He declared His co-equality with the Father in these words, *I and the Father are one*, they *took up stones again to stone Him*. His words were plain assertions to the people of His Divinity, else there would be no meaning in the charge brought against Him that He spake blasphemy. They acknowledged when they sought to stone Him, and by the very act itself, that He claimed to Himself the attributes of God. This was what the Scribes and Pharisees declared when they accused Him of blasphemy; and Caiaphas proclaimed the same when, on hearing our Blessed Lord's declaration, he *rent his clothes*. John viii. 58.

In preferring by works and by implication to assert His Divinity, rather than by words, He taught us to manifest the reality of our professions by the deeds of our life rather than by the words of our lips.

By this miracle we are taught—

(1) That in the one person of our Blessed Lord there were two distinct natures—the Divine and the human. This we see, on the one hand, in His submission to human weakness and by His condescending to the use of human means, and also by the charge of the Scribes and Pharisees, that He, being man, claimed to exercise the prerogatives of God. On the other hand, the truth of his Divinity is evidenced

Hilarius exponit '*Qui dedit talem potestatem hominibus, ut fiant filii Dei,*' ut in Ioan. i. 12, *Dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri.*—*Th. Aquinas.*

¹ Estius and, again, Olshausen understand *ἀνθρώποις* to be used instead of *τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ*, and that the

multitudes rejoiced that God had given such power to this man, i. e. to Christ Jesus. Royard says, "*Dedit non quidem angelis, non archangelis, non quibuscunque spiritibus angelicis, sed mortalibus hominibus, creaturæ fragili et sine peccato non viventi.*"

by the miracles wrought by His own power and done in attestation of His claim to be God.

(2) That Christ is able to heal the diseases both of the soul and the body.

(3) By the crowd around the door we are reminded of the hindrances which interpose to prevent the sinner coming to Christ,¹ and are warned against sinning, lest we not only come not ourselves to the Saviour, but lest we hinder thereby those who would come.

(4) By the example of the friends of the paralytic man we are taught our duty to the sick in body or soul, and are encouraged to bring them to Christ for healing.

(5) From the example of the Scribes and Pharisees we are warned not to blaspheme God; and

Hofmeister. (6) From the example of the multitudes we are bidden to glorify Him for every act of mercy and of love.

In this miracle, and in its attendant circumstances, we have a picture of Christ's earthly life, and the blessings which flow to us from His incarnation. He went up into the vessel and committed Himself to the waves of this world when He became incarnate; for with our flesh He took its weaknesses, our whole nature, tossed by conflicting passions —being *made like unto His brethren, and in all points tempted like as we are*. In this nature He came *unto His own city*, the world which He had made. Then at His coming the palsied in soul, those who were bound to their beds, enslaved to the body by evil habits and powerless to do good, were brought to Him, and these He healed by His teaching and suffering. The whole time that He was employed in His mission of love the Pharisees denied His claim to be God, and accused Him of blasphemy because that He, being a man, made *Himself equal with God*. For this they accused Him to the people, for this they moved them to stone Him, and for this they at length hurried Him to death. In that death, however, more than in His earthly life, He brought healing to the whole human race. By dying on the cross He gave to every sinner power to *arise* from his sins; the blood and the water poured out at His death brought remission of sins and gave strength to the penitent to walk in newness of life. By His resurrection He bids us *take up our bed*, the body of this death; and by His rising again, who was our *firstfruits*, from the tomb, He conferred on the whole human race the power of

Heb. ii. 17;
iv. 15.

John v. 18.

1 Cor. xv. 20.

¹ "Quia angusta porta est, ideo turba non intrat. Et quidem turba non modo non intrat, sed impedimento est infirmis, ne intrent et salutem accipiant. Multi siquidem, turbæ dissolutam et laxam vitam videntes, occasionem accipiunt non intrandi ad Christum: ad quem introissent si omnes introeuntes vidissent."—*Paulus de Palacio*.

rising from the grave in that body which had been borne about by man upon earth. But He rose not only to give power to the body; He rose also for the *justification* of the soul; and hence He calls us *to go* into our own *house*, the place which He has prepared for us in heaven—our true home and our abiding country.

Rom. iv. 25.

Heb. xi. 16.
Matt. Faber.

. “O benigne Domine Jesu Christe, qui es Omnipotens Deus et homo verus, qui terram Gergesenorum, cui acceptus non eras, relinquens, tanquam infirmus homo mare trajecisti, et homini paralytico peccata remisisti, nos miseri peccatores oramus Te ne deseras nos, sed maneat apud nos, doceas nos, confirmes nostram fidem, repleas nos bonis cogitationibus et in-

spirationibus, ignoscas peccata nostra, sanes internas nostras affectiones et defectus, des etiam nobis gratiam, qua divinam Tuam voluntatem in omnibus ita perficiamus, ut quilibet ex vita nostra ædificetur in bonum, atque Te timeat, laudet, Tibique gratias agat cum Deo Patre et Spiritu Sancto, cum quo regnas in æternum. Amen.”—*Cæster.*

THE TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. MATTHEW XXII. 1—14.

(1) [*And*] *Jesus [answered and spake unto them again by parables, and] said,*

Tostatus.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Matt. xxi. 43.

THIS parable continues the teaching of the previous one of the wicked husbandmen. Hence it is said that *Jesus answered*: not, that is, to a new interrogation of the Scribes and Pharisees, but to the questionings which had led to the former parable; or the same word is used as at other times, in replying to the questioning of the hearts, to the thoughts which were passing in the minds, of those who stood before Him. In the preceding parable our Blessed Lord had said that the kingdom should be taken from those husbandmen who had disobeyed their Lord, and, having killed His messengers, had finally taken the life of His Son; and He further explained this parable by saying, that *the kingdom of God* should be taken from the Jews, and should be *given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*. Now He proceeds to show what people that should be; those who listened to His invitation and obeyed His call from all the nations of the earth. In other ways also the teaching of this parable is carried beyond the point where the former parable ends.¹ There He spake of His death—*the heir* of all things—by the

¹ "Parabola et similitudo istius Evangelii, si rectè consideretur, nihil aliud est quam brevis quædam comprehensio totius Sacræ Scripturæ: id quod indicatu facile est. Hoc enim omnes fateantur oportet, quod Sacra Scriptura potissimum et in primis de sequentibus rebus loquitur: utpotè primò de Deo. Secundò de redemptione per Christum instituenda, et jam facta. Tertiò de fœdere jam antiquitùs à Deo facto cum Abraham ejusque

semine. Quartò de variis beneficiis quæ Deus illi populo exhibuit. Quintò de magna ingratitude illius populi. Sextò de pœna et interitu eorum. Septimò de vocatione gentium per Apostolos. Octavò de malis et falsis Christianis. Nondò de futuro judicio. Hæc, inquam, ferè præcipua sunt quæ nobis Scriptura proponit. Ea autem omnia etiam in hac similitudine comprehensa sunt."—*Ferus in Dom.*

hands of the husbandmen of the vineyard : here He speaks of the marriage feast, for by His death, and by reason of that sacrifice, was that marriage of Christ with His people, which commenced with His incarnation and the taking up of the nature of man into union with the Divine nature, consummated at His crucifixion and the consequent sending of the Holy Spirit.¹ Again, in the first parable, addressed more especially to *the chief priests and elders of the people*, He threatened the ministers of His Church—the rulers of the Jews—with rejection for their sins : here He speaks of what shall befall the whole city and nation as the consequence of their refusal to listen to this new invitation from the King of kings. In the first parable the love of God towards His own people is shown in His bearing with them until they had slain *the heir*—His only-begotten Son : in the present parable we are shown that not even the death of Christ extinguished the love of the Father for the Jewish nation, that He invited them to the *marriage* feast which was made by the very death of the Incarnate One, and that even then He called those whom of old He had invited, and who again refused to listen to His call.

Chrysostom.

Matt. xxi. 23.

Arendaño.

Bredembach.

He spake unto them again by parables. Since we are accustomed to the teaching of sensible things, and are more influenced by them than by other lessons, God is ever leading us by the hand and making use of those means to guide us into all truth. By means of those things which strike our senses He leads us on to intellectual truth, and from intellectual truths He conducts us to that which is spiritual and divine. For if we believe not earthly things, which are the images of that which is divine, *how shall we believe heavenly things?* God deals with us as He did with the Magi, whom He led by the star into the presence of the Incarnate Saviour. We have a striking instance of this in the present parable, where, under the figure of an earthly banquet and a marriage in the world, we are taught truths concerning our spiritual union with Jesus Christ.

John iii. 12.

Voriagne.

The parable is in itself an expansion, but in a great measure a repetition also, of a former parable—a striking instance of the fact that our Blessed Lord, in His love to

Luke xiv. 16
—24.

¹ “ Perfectè aptari parabola non potest ad tempus quo Christus nondum mortuus erat, nec Spiritum Sanctum miserat, Siquidem ante Christi mortem et Spiritus missionem non erant omnia parata. Maxima nam pars regii convivii Spiritus Sanctus est. Igitur simile est regnum cœlorum homini

regi, qui tempore incarnationis fecit nuptias filio suo; sed quia ante prandium multa parari solent, hac causa triginta et tribus fere annis necessaria convivio parabantur. Mortuo verò Christo et Spiritu Sancto misso, *erant jam omnia parata.*—*Paulus de Palacio.*

Stier. us, condescended to repeat the lessons of eternal wisdom.¹ Like the king of whom He is speaking, who, not ceasing from his invitations to the marriage feast because of the indifference and obstinacy of those whom he had summoned, sends out other servants with the same message as before; so upon the ears that were deaf to His teaching in the house of the Pharisee the Saviour lets fall the same warning and repeats the same lesson.

Luke xiv. 1. In this parable, then, we have two truths insisted upon. Rom. ix. 24. God is a God *not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles*, for from the first He had other sheep which were not of the Jewish fold. John x. 16. Now, in calling into His Church a people who as yet were not a people, and making them to be *the sons of the living God*, He shows that the rejection of the Jews from being His peculiar people and nation was an act of self-rejection. Hosea i. 10. Hofmeister.

Though He spake as never man yet spake, and though He was unwearied in His teaching, and in giving the signs of His power in attestation of His mission, yet Pharisee, and Scribe, and priest, and people turned away, and refused to be convicted even when they were convinced by the truths which fell from His lips. By this let the minister and preacher of His truth learn not to be discouraged, though his words seem to fall without effect to the earth, and his cry appears to be unheeded. God rewards not those who bring penitents to Him, but those who are faithful to their trust, whether men hear or whether they refuse to listen to God's Word spoken by His ministers. It is the sincerity of the work, not the fruit, which He rewards; for the fruit is His own, since it is only *God that giveth the increase*.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

1 Cor. iii. 7.

Matt. xxv. 1
—10.
Luke xiv. 16.
Rev. xix. 7
—9.

(2) *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king (ἄνθρωπῳ βασιλεῖ²), which made a marriage for his son.³*

¹ This is not the same parable as that recorded by St. Luke. See Augustine *de Cons. Evang.* lib. 2, cap. 71; S. Greg. Hom. xxxix. in *Evang.*; Tostatus, quæst. iii.; Sylveira, and Trench on the *Parables*, Parable xii.

² "Homini regi — quia regit nos humano modo."—Th. Aquinas.

³ "Cum hac parabola fere convenit illa quæ legitur in Breschith Rabba, sect. 62, fol. 60, 3. R. Eleasar simile protulit de rege quodam, qui convivium instruxit, ad illudque peregrini-

nos et in itinere constitutos invitavit (πορεύεσθε εἰς τὰς διεξόδους τῶν ὁδῶν, v. 9), quibus etiam ostendit quidnam edere et bibere deberent (οἱ ταῦτοι μου καὶ τὰ σιτιστὰ τεθυμένα, v. 4): illi itaque postquam saturati sunt, in utramque aurem dormierunt. Sic quoque Deus S. B. justis ostendit adhuc in mundo viventibus mercedem ipsorum, quam quondam ipsis in mundo futuro daturus est, et saturat ipsos, et illi dormiunt."—Schoettgen in *Hor. Heb. et Talmud*.

The *king* who is here pictured to us as making a *marriage for his son* is the Almighty Father. The *son*, the bridegroom, is Jesus Christ, who by His taking our flesh into union with the Godhead, married the Church to Himself; and the bride, the Church, is that body which was taken out of the Jewish and Gentile people, collected into *one fold*, and united for ever to the Redeemer; whilst *the kingdom of heaven* here spoken of is but another name for the militant Church of God, the bride of the Lamb, as the parable is a picture of what has taken place, and is still happening, in the Church upon earth.¹ This is evident—

John x. 16.

Bredembach.

(1) In that this parable is a continuation and an explanation of what had been previously taught by our Blessed Lord, as to the rejection of the wicked husbandmen from His vineyard on earth.

(2) Into the kingdom of God on earth—His militant Church—good and bad were to be alike received; but this, though true of the kingdom of heaven, is not true of His kingdom in heaven, into which nothing impure can enter; for *there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.*

Rev. xxi. 27.

(3) To the feast in this kingdom a man is represented as coming without a fitting garment.² This is not true of the world to come—the kingdom of glory—though true of the militant Church of Christ, into which a man may enter by the door of baptism, but may have no fitting robe of righteousness, such as God will approve.

(4) From the kingdom of glory—the new Jerusalem—none can be ejected, because no sinner can there enter.

Tostatus.

The Church militant, then, is this *kingdom of heaven*. Our Blessed Lord says not kingdoms, for there is but one, which is governed by one Lord and is directed by one law. It is a heavenly kingdom, because it is the court and entrance to heaven; the laws which are recognised there are heavenly laws; the ruler a heavenly King; the doctrines taught are from heaven, for the revelation of God's truths and will in Holy Scripture is given from heaven; the promises there set before us are heavenly; and in it we are exhorted to set

Ephes. iv. 6.
Boya,

Barradius.

¹ "*Regnum cælorum id est ecclesia, ut passim exponunt Patres. Homini regi, hoc est homini, qui rex erat. Bonus nexus hominis et regis: quo ostenditur, clementem ac pium regem esse oportere, ac suis subditis humanum.*"—*Emm. ab Incarnatione.*

² In place of a *marriage* the Syriac version reads a *feast*, that is, a mar-

riage feast. There were among the Jews a feast of espousals, and also a marriage feast, and it was a rule that the marriage feast should be made by and at the expense of the father. Thus Maimonides says, "A father marries his son, and makes a feast for him, and the expense is the father's."—*Gill.*

Col. iii. 2.
Ælfric.

our affections not on things on the earth, but on the things of heaven.

Isa. lxii. 5.

Under the figure of a *marriage* the prophets of old had spoken of the kingdom of Christ, and of that union which should be between God and His people. The promise made to Israel through the lips of Isaiah was, that *as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee*. When reproaching the Israelites for their departure from God, and figuring the people as an unfaithful wife, the days of restoration are spoken of by Hosea, who says, *I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord*.

Hosea ii. 19,
20.

John iii. 29.

Matt. xxv. 1
—13.

Luke xiv. 16.
Rev. xxi. 2.
Rev. xxi. 9.

Under this name of love does St. John the Baptist speak of the Messiah: *He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom*. So, in the parables of Christ, He speaks of the time of His coming as a marriage feast; and St. John, in the vision of the Revelation, has the Church pointed out to him as *a bride adorned for her husband, as the Lamb's wife*.¹ The kingdom and the grace of Christ are of so exalted a character that they are set before us with an accumulation of figures of glory:—

(1) His coming is, as nuptials, a cause of joy and gladness, not of sorrow, to the world and to the souls of His people.

(2) These are no common nuptials; they are full of glory and splendour, for they are regal nuptials.

Rev. xix. 9.
Paulus de
Palacio.

(3) These nuptials, unlike the marriage of earth, will never be broken. *The marriage feast, the supper of the Lamb*, will last throughout eternity.

Hofmeister.

(4) They are not merely magnificent, as those of a prince, but of deep love, for they are the nuptials prepared by a Father for His Son.

The *king*, then, who made the marriage for his son is the Almighty Father;² the bridegroom is the Eternal Son; the bride is the Church of Christ, the marriage with whom commenced at the incarnation of our Blessed Lord.³ And this marriage is threefold, the two latter flowing from the former but yet distinct from it:—

¹ “Si rei magnitudinem audes penetrare, intellige qualis desponsatio sit: ut Deus, Suum esse, Suam subsistentiam det humanæ naturæ. Dedit ergo ei Suam infinitatem. Contra vero nostra humanitas, Verbo Dei, esse dedit humanum, et omnis caro scænum [Isaiæ xl. 6]. Vide quod caro dederit Deo:

certè ut laboraret, ut crucifigeretur et sepeliretur.”—*Paulus de Palacio*.

² “Propter dilectionem quam habet Deus ad hominem, dicitur Pater homo.”—*Rich. de S. Laurentius*.

³ “Tunc Pater filio nuptias fecit, quando hunc in utero virginis humanæ naturæ conjunxit.”—*S. Gregory*.

(1) There is the union of the two natures of God and man, in the person of Christ Jesus, in the womb of the blessed Virgin. This, indeed, is not the marriage referred to, for to this none were called; but it is by virtue of this that the whole race of man is united to God, and the souls of the faithful can be joined unto, and share in, the blessings of Christ.

Theophylact.
Cajetan.
Avendaño.

Jans. Gand.

(2) The union of Christ with His Church, which was begun at the passion of Christ, when the Church of God was formed from His side, as Eve from the side of Adam. This marriage was ratified by the act of resurrection, when He burst asunder the bonds of death; was consummated in the ascension of our Blessed Lord, when He gave gifts unto men; and is hereafter to be perfected in the resurrection of all things, when He will present the Church to His Father without *spot or wrinkle*, and shall make them eternally blessed who have been found worthy to be admitted to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Corn. à Lap.

Zech. ix. 11.

Ephes. iv. 8.

Ephes. v. 27.

Rev. xix. 7.

(3) The union of the True Wisdom with the soul of each member of His body.¹

Gorranus.

These two latter are the fruits of the incarnation by which man was united to God. For as there is no star in the heavens which does not derive its light from the sun, so is there no soul that is holy but by virtue of that holiness which is communicated by *Jesus Christ the Righteous*.

Titelmann.

Avendaño.

1 John ii. 1.

Oh the mercy and the boundlessness of the love of Christ, who, not content with the union with our nature which He wrought at His incarnation, still thirsts for union with the soul of each of us!

Abelly.

Our Blessed Lord selects that union which is the most binding, the most tender, the most faithful, and the most inviolate of all alliances, to figure the close and beneficent union of Christ with the soul of man. And as in earthly marriages there is the union of hearts—the close and con-

Quessnel.

¹ “ Dieu veut S’unir aux âmes par une effusion de Sa bonté, Il veut Se communiquer à elles, et les rendre participantes de Sa sagesse, de Sa justice, et de Sa félicité, et, en un mot, de Sa *nature*, comme parle Saint Pierre (2 Pet. i. 4). Il ne reçoit aucun bien d’elles, mais Il les comble de biens; et c’est la première différence des noces spirituelles d’avec les noces humaines. Car si les grands de la terre communiquent leur grandeur à leur épouses, ils entrent aussi en participation de leurs biens. Si l’époux est la félicité de

l’épouse, l’épouse est la félicité de l’époux. Mais l’Epoux divin donne tout aux âmes, et ne reçoit rien d’elles. Il Se communique à elles par une pure abondance de miséricorde et de bonté. Il est tout plein de gloire et de félicité en Lui-même. Il les répand sur les épouses; mais elles sont dans l’impuissance de Lui rien donner, parce que Son bonheur ne peut recevoir d’accroissement, et qu’elles n’ont rien que ce qu’il leur donne.”—*Nicole sur les Evangiles*.

Stapleton.

Ephes. v. 23.

stant bond of affection—the communion of interests and property, and the order of subjection; so in the spiritual nuptials of Christ with His people is there the union of spirit, the communication of gifts and graces, and finally the order of subjection: for as *the husband is the head of the wife*, so *Christ is the head of the Church*.

And this figure of nuptial union is striking in the closeness of its resemblance to the union of Christ with the nature as well as with the person of the believer:—

Gen. ii. 24.
Matt. xix. 5.

(1) As in marriage two become *one flesh*, so by the union of the Divine and human natures is there but one Christ.

(2) As the bond of marriage is by the law of God indissoluble, so has the Divine nature taken unto itself the human by the incarnation of Christ, never to lay it aside.

(3) As the bride shares in the honours and the dignity of the bridegroom, so does the human nature which Christ has joined to the Divine partake of the infinite power of Godhead.

(4) As by marriage all difference is not only at an end, but is changed into the closest union; so by the union of the two natures in the one person of Christ is man reconciled to God.

Gerhard.
Salmeron.
John i. 12.

(5) As marriage is for the procreation of children, so is the incarnation in order to beget a generation which shall be children of God, for in and by this He gave to those who *received Him power to become the sons of God*.¹

And this union of Christ with the soul has its several stages:—

(1) The beginning of such union is in holy baptism, by which we are regenerated and receive the robe which we are to keep undefiled.

(2) This union is cemented by the holy communion of Christ's body and blood, by which we are sanctified, and through which He especially dwells in us.

(3) This union is consummated, perfected, and rendered unchangeable in heaven. The other may be broken, but this is eternal.

Medaille.

(3) *And sent forth his servants to call them that*

¹ “Est quoddam genus matrimonii carnale significans istam unionem animæ ad Christum, ut dicit Innocentius. Papa, extra de biga. capitulo debitum, et idem Magister quarto sentent. distinctio vigesima sexta. Et istæ nuptiæ celebrantur quoties anima fidelis Christo unitur, et

ex talibus nuptiis proles bonorum operum sequitur. Sic dicit Origenes. Conjunctionem sponsi ad sponsam—id est, Christi ad animam—verbi susceptionem intellige: partus autem bona opera.”—*Tostatus*.

were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.¹

The first call was before the marriage; the second, in accordance with Eastern custom, was on the day of the celebration of the wedding.² Bengel.

This part of the parable is a picture of God's dealings with men, and this call historically represents the invitations of God before the coming of Christ, before the marriage of Godhead with humanity in His person; whilst the refusal to obey is a representation of the refusal of the Jews to listen to and obey the teaching of the prophets of God.³ From the time of the first patriarchs and prophets, from Moses until the days which immediately preceded the birth of Christ, many were the calls by which God summoned men to the wedding, and from the fall of man all who were taught by God looked forward to the coming of the Messiah. So, again, all prophecies, whether of the sacrificial ceremonial law, or those uttered by the mouth of men, were fulfilled in Christ. Menochius.
Theophylact
Jerome.
Bredembach
Corn. à Lap.

But though, in speaking to the Jews, our Blessed Lord without doubt referred to the obstinacy and blindness of their nature, and to their refusal to listen to God's call, yet these words are true also of the whole race of mankind from the fall of Adam, who by the mouth of the old patriarchs, and by prophets sent to them—by the teaching of nature as well as by special messengers—were summoned from the ways of this evil world. The primary and direct reference, however, is to the Jewish people. The first call—the bidding to the wedding—was from the earliest times; the reiteration of the call was at the coming of Christ.⁴ The Toplarius.

¹ “*Et nolebant venire*—Non dicit, noluerunt (uti dicendum videbatur) sed *nolebant*; quod dicit permanentem ac perseverantem voluntatem, sive potius nolitionem. Et per id significatur Judæorum durities et pervicacia in repellendo Christo hominum redemptore.”—*Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

² “In particular, this was a custom among the upper classes at Jerusalem. Sepp cites *Echa Rabbathi*, iv. 2. Quænam fuit gloria Hierosolymitanorum? Nemo eorum venit ad convivium, nisi bis vocatus.”—*Stier on the Words of the Lord Jesus* (English Translation, vol. iii. p. 135).

³ “By those that were bidden or

called are meant the Jews, who were the bidden or called ones; called of God, and therefore styled *Israel, my called*, Isa. xlviii. 12; and by the Targum interpreted *מְבִרְרִי, my bidden*.”—*Gill*.

⁴ “*Le roi, dit notre Evangile, envoya ses serviteurs pour appeler aux noces ceux qui y étaient invités. Il y a donc une invitation qui précède la vocation particulière; et cette invitation suffit pour les rendre inexcusables quand ils ne la suivent pas: Ita ut sint inexcusabiles, comme dit Saint Paul (Rom. i. 20). Or dès-là qu'ils sont inexcusables il s'ensuit qu'ils sont coupables de ne pas la suivre, et que c'est par leur faute*

banquet, indeed, is the same, for all the servants of God announced the same Messiah; the prophets pointing to One who should hereafter appear, the Apostles to One who had already come. It is the banquet in this life which is here spoken of, the period when men have the power to accept or to refuse God's call, not the supper at the end of the day, the joys of the world to come, which are spoken of as *the supper of the Lamb*.¹ In these words, he *sent forth his servants to call them that were, or had been, bidden*, Christ implies that the new call was but the reiteration of the old invitation, since the new dispensation is but the completion of the old, the truths of the New Testament but the republication of those which were from the beginning.

Rab. Maurus.

Peraldus.

Rev. xix. 9.

Trench.

Greswell.

Mansi.

Coster.

Konigsteyn.

Here let us note the condescension of the king, who invites his subjects when he might have commanded their attendance: so does God invite all men to Him, but compels none, for to all there remains free will, the power of refusing to obey His call. So, also, the words of the parable are that *they would not come*, not that they could not, for to reject or to listen to the call of God is in man's power. Let none, then, say, I could not come; I could not believe; I had not the power nor the means of living as God's child should. When we turn away from the grace and the salvation offered to us, it is not from want of the power, but of the will, to accept that which God offers. Neither inability to believe, nor ignorance, excludes us from the blessings which God has prepared for us, but only our obstinacy in rejecting His merciful offer.²

The contempt of the Jews for the call of God is expressed—

(1) By their not attending to His first invitation, who had *bidden* them of old to the marriage feast.

(2) In their still refusing to come when God in mercy reiterated His call.

Gorranus.

Exod. xvi. 8.

How historically all this is true of the children of Israel we may see in the record of their national existence. They were continually turning away from God, continually disregarding His call. At one time they were full of desire to turn back and to abandon the path into which God had led them, in order to enjoy again the flesh-pots, though embittered with the servitude, of Egypt. And when they were with-

qu'ils ne la suivent pas; autrement ils ne seraient pas inexcusables, ni coupables."—*Nicole sur les Evangiles*.

¹ "Prandium harum nuptiarum est refectio spiritualis quam habet Ecclesia in præsenti. Cœna erat refectio quæ erit in futuro."—*Peraldus*.

² "Non fuit defectus Dei invitantis,

non culpa vocantis; nec impotentia abstulit veniendi facultatem, nec ignorantia intulit cæcitatem; sed sola voluntatis malitia fecit contemptum. Et nunc quod ad cœlestes nuptias plerique non veniunt tota causa est, quia venire nolunt."—*Royard*.

held from this, and when the law had been given to them, then perversely they fastened upon its ceremonial and outward observances merely, and rested in these, though the law, indeed, had been given to them that it might be their *schoolmaster to bring them unto Christ*. Salmeron.
Gal. iii. 24.

God sends those who are to call men to His marriage feast: they go not of their own accord to execute this work.¹ Paulus de Palacio.

(4) *Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed,² and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.* Prov. ix. 2.

The first call of mankind was made by the prophets before the incarnation of our Blessed Lord, and when this failed to bring in to the banquet the nation of the Jews, then were *other servants* sent, and these not to announce a marriage which was to take place at some future time, but to summon those who had hitherto rejected the invitation to one already made, and to a banquet already prepared. These *other servants* were the messengers under the New Testament dispensation: our Blessed Lord, who, so far as He was man, was a *servant*, and *the mediator of the new covenant*, and the preacher of repentance to those who had hitherto refused to attend to God's call; John the Baptist, who proclaimed the Phil. ii. 7.
Heb. xii. 24.
Matt. iv. 17.
Mark i. 14.

¹ "Hic primum intellege, nemo vocare ad nuptias debet, nisi servus regis. Ergo peccator tu, qui diaboli servus es quare narras justitias Dei et ad ejus nuptias vocas? Secundo intellege neminem servum Dei munus vocationis debere sibi arrogare, nisi mittatur misit inquit servos suos, *quomodo enim prædicabunt nisi mittantur* (Rom. x.) meritò igitur Paulus perpetuò cum scribit, de sua vocatione commemorat, dicens: *vocatus apostolus, Et segregatus* (Rom. v.)."—Paulus de Palacio.

² "Τεθυμένα vertitur *altitia mactata sunt. Maiim sacrificata sunt*. Nam Judæos in nuptiis Deo sacrificasse colligitur ex Josepho, lib. iv. Antiq. c. 8; ubi leges Mosaicæ recenset, "Ετι μηδὲ ἡτραπεμένης εἶναι γάμον, ἥς δι' ἑβριν τοῦ σώματος τὰς ἐπὶ τῷ γάμῳ θυσίας ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἂν πρόσσιτο. *Neque meretrici jus sit nuptiarum, cujus ob corporis*

injuriam victimas nuptiarum gratia oblatas non admitteret Deus. Rei etiam momentum postulavit, ut nuptiæ non sine precibus publicis et victimis fierent, magnificæ præsertim et regum, de quibus h. l. Reliquiis autem proinde vescebantur in convivio nuptiali. Idem apud profanos moris erat. . . . Wolfius *mactationis* significationem præfert, quia ταῦροι et σιτιστὰ memorantur, ad convivium sinè dubio mactata: sed sine ratione. Ut enim ex omnibus convivii nonnulla sacerdotibus cedebant, de quibus Josephus, lib. iv. Antiq. 24, sic *sacrificata* dici possunt, quorum pars sacrificata fuerat; qua ratione reliqua omnia sacra censebantur. Accedit quod Heb. זבח *mactare et sacrificare*, quomodo Latinis *mactare etiam sacrificare, immolare*, notat, ut *θυσία convivium et sacrificium*."—Elsner.

Mark vi. 7.

kingdom of God as nigh at hand; and the disciples of Christ, whom He sent out two by two before His face.

*Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner.*¹ He does not send His messengers and at the same time leave them to choose the message which they will deliver, but He puts the message itself into their mouth, and tells them what they shall say. God gives those whom He appoints, through the ministry of His Church, both the letter of that word which they are to deliver and the Spirit to guide them. The letter is the whole and pure Word of God, the Scriptures of His will, not as explained by any Jewish interpretation, but as unfolded and made evident by the Spirit which abides in His Church.

2 Pet. i. 20.

Coster.

Bengel.

I have prepared. I—that is, none other than God Himself. Our salvation is not effected by our own power, but by that of God, who prepares the heart to receive His message. We have but to accept what He has prepared for us, and what He has prepared us to receive. It is not our wish, not our fitness, which procures salvation; but whilst we are unworthy, and destitute, and undesirous of His mercies, He calls and offers His mercies to us.

Spener.

Stier.

Rab. Maurus.

Pseudo-
Chrysostom.
Gloss. Ordin.

Remigius.

Theophylact.

All things are ready. Now, for the first time, all that has been determined from the foundation of the world, all that has been promised by the law and the prophets,² all that has been for so long a time in preparation, the mysteries of the incarnation and of the baptism of Christ, His teaching, His passion, His resurrection and ascension,—all are ready; and to this we are called. All things necessary to man's salvation are clearly announced in Holy Scripture, and completed by the act of incarnation, so that the whole mystery and sacrament of the dispensation of Christ is completed and closed.

All men are called to the marriage feast as well by nature as by grace. They are called because they are men, the sons of God by creation.³ Hence He says *other* servants,

¹ “That feast, grace and truth in all their fulness, which Christ came to deliver. *A feast indeed of fat things*, yet distinguished from the *supper of the Lamb* at the close of the world.”—*Meyer*.

² “Ταῦτοι καὶ σιτιστὰ, ἡ παλαιὰ καὶ ἡ νέα διαθήκη· ἡ μὲν γὰρ παλαιὰ ἐμφαίνεται διὰ τῶν ταύρων, ζωθυσίας γὰρ εἶχεν· ἡ δὲ νέα διὰ τῶν σιτιστῶν, ἄρτους γὰρ προσφέρομεν νῦν ἐν τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ· οἱ ἐτυμώτερον ἀν κληθεῖεν σιτιστὰ, ὡς ἐκ σίτου συνιστάμενοι·

καλεῖ τοίνυν ἡμᾶς ὁ Θεὸς ἵνα φάγωμεν καὶ τὰ τῆς παλαιᾶς γραφῆς ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὰ τῆς νέας.”—*Theophylact*.

³ “Misit vocare invitatos; nondum quisquam eos invitaverat, et invitati vocantur, nam eo ipso quod homines sumus, rationem habentes, invitati sumus. Ratio enim docet nos non nostrum esse prandium, nec nostra festa ista terrena, sed Deum esse, ad quem comparandum sumus ante creati.”—*Paulus de Palacio*.

for the means by which God calls are unlimited. It is not by one means only, but by repeated Divine calls, that we are summoned from the market-place of the world, and invited to the banquet which God has prepared. Those who are not led by prosperity, and by His benefits, He calls by adversity and by suffering, not ceasing to call when one servant, one kind of call, is turned from. Thus He calls Coster.
us :—

(1) By His word, by the revelation of His will.

(2) By the voice of those whom He has set over us, our parents and our spiritual pastors.

(3) By the examples of His saints and true disciples, and more especially by His example, the Man Christ Jesus, who is the one perfect pattern set before all men.

(4) By the mercies and blessings which He lavishly pours upon us.

(5) By adversity and suffering, by the trials of life, and by the evils which befall us as the consequences and scourges of our sins.

(6) By the call of conscience, which is His voice within us, and by remorse when we fall into sin.

(7) By internal inspiration, by suggestions and desires Matt. Faber.
after repentance, and by aspirations after holiness.

Let us note that, whilst the preparation and the call to partake of the banquet are from God, the rejection and the banishment from that banquet are the deliberate act of man. Titelmann.
God's mercies fail not, but man's wilfulness abounds. Thus, in the repetition of the call—the *other servants* sent forth by the king to call the guests to the wedding feast—we have the great pattern and long-suffering love of God pointed out to us. for His mercy fails not, but *endureth for ever*. Luca Brug.
Ps. cxxxvi.
passim.

(5) *But they made light of it,¹ and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.*

They *went their ways*. Those who do not answer God's invitation go forth from Him, and lose the advantage which they would have had by obeying His call. These men are represented as preferring temporal things—the world, and Bengel.

¹ *Neglexerunt*.—"Verbum Græcum [ἀμελήσαντες] huic correspondens significat, teste Novarino in præsentī, non solum negligere et contemnere, sed etiam securum esse. Sic impii, cū Dei vocationem ac dona negligunt, quasi securos se reputant, et rem salutis

sue in tuto locatam arbitrantur. Significat etiam idem verbum contemptum cum quodam fastidio. Sic res spirituales et quæ ad salutem nostram spectant non nudè negligimus, sed cum quadam nausæ fastidimus."—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione*.

Corn. & Lap.

Bengel.

Alb. Magnus.
Lyra.

its cares and allurements—to the service and the joys in God's presence. The one is represented as led away by the desire after landed possessions, the other after moveable goods; as men are hindered from God's service at one time by ease and a false contentment with what they have, at another time by ambition and the desire of obtaining more; for by the *merchandise* of the world is meant everything that keeps man back from the celestial banquet—the occupation of the mind by the love of perishable things.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.
Avendaño.

Let us remember that those who are represented here, and in other parables, as excluded from the good things prepared for them at God's right hand, are not set before us as guilty of positive sin, but as negligent, as occupied by the cares of the world,¹ feeling secure in their present state, and therefore indifferent to eternal possessions or even despising them, as men who prefer the world, with its occupations and allurements, to the joys of heaven. If, then, through the pursuit of things honest and lawful, such as the care of worldly possessions or of merchandise, men may lose heaven, how much more will they be rejected whose lives are passed in positive sin!² Four causes are here pointed out as hindering men from accepting the invitation of Christ:³—

Peraldua.

(1) The obstinate refusal to believe—*they would not come*; the rejection of that for which they had not the evidence which they required, whether this arose from the pre-occupation of the heart with worldly pleasures or from the blindness caused by vanity.

(2) Indifference to the call of God; the surrender of the heart to the effeminacy of an easy life—domestic quiet, the serene pleasures of possession, our houses, or farms—mingled oftentimes, though it may be unconsciously, with avarice.

(3) The anxieties and cares of life—the perplexities which arise from the pursuit of the merchandise of this world, the all-engrossing occupation of business—tinged, it may be, with ambition.⁴

(4) Passions leading us to active opposition to God, to

¹ Ἀμελήσαντες—carelessly neglecting the message. See Barrow in *First Sermon on Universal Redemption* (Sermon lxxi.).

² “Honesta res est negotiatio, sive dignitatis, sive militiæ, si impedimentum religionis non facit. Villa non est peccatum: si impedit, fit peccatum. Non ergo ipsa cultura peccatum est, sed tu facis ipsam peccatum, præferendo

eam Deo.”—Hugo de S. Charo.

³ “O phreneticum facinus! Pauper es, famelicus es, tristis es, mortuus es; vocaris ad vitam, ad festa, ad convivia, ad opes immensas, et renuis.”—Paulus de Palacio.

⁴ “Bona est res uxoria, sed cavenda: bona negotiatio, sed periculosa: bona rusticatio, sed curis et labore plenissima.”—Paulus de Palacio.

determined rejection of His invitation, to fighting against the truth. The first three causes of spiritual ruin are pointed out in this and in the preceding verses; the latter cause is referred to in the next verse. Stapleton.
Quenel.

It was the love of the world, as shown in their fear of losing their temple, and city, all the earthly grandeur and position which they still possessed, which led the Jews to shut their ears to God's call, and caused them to go on from that to the murder of his messengers. This inbred love of the world is shown in the readiness, the naturalness, so to say, by which they lowered the spiritual truths of revelation, and gave a carnal and worldly interpretation to the spiritual promises and requirements of the law. Lyra.
Tostatus.

(6) *And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.*

Three kinds of men, answering to the three kinds of soil from which the good seed springs not, or comes not to perfection, are here set before us:—

(1) Those who have no belief in God, who simply will not come, who pass their lives in an Epicurean indifference.

(2) Those who would be Christians, who, perhaps, half intend to follow Christ, but who are so entangled with worldly affairs, that they make light of Christ's service, thinking it may be sufficiently performed without giving up the engrossing care of farm and merchandise.

(3) The active and determined opponents and persecutors of Christ and His Church. Hofmeister.

(7) *But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.* Dan. ix, 26.
Matt. xxiii.
37.
Luke xiii. 34;
xix. 27, 43.

When the king heard thereof. The disobedience of man is a crying sin, rising to the ears of God and heard by Him; Bengel.

¹ Or as another commentator says: "Notandum quod quatuor ex causis aliqui invitati ad has nuptias non veniunt ad eas. *Prima* est error vel defectus fidei. Ad quod pertinet illud, *nolebant venire*—id est, credere. Hoc impedimentum est in eis qui non credunt ea quæ non vident. *Secunda* causa est defectus amoris veri boni. Ad quod pertinet illud, *illi autem neglexerunt*—id est, suæ salutis præconium. *Tertia* causa est immoderatus amor boni transitorii. Ad quod pertinet illud, *et*

abierunt, alius in villam suam, etc. Hoc impedimentum est in eis qui in servitio mundi adeo occupati sunt, quod nec sibi nec Deo vacare possunt, sed excusationes prætendunt. *Quarta* causa est appetitus alieni mali. Ad quod pertinet illud, *reliqui tenuerunt servos ejus*, etc. Hoc impedimentum est in eis qui salutis adiutores reputant hostes, qui non possunt audire verbum de liberatione sua, qui periculum suum amare videntur."—*Peraldus*.

Gloss.
Interim.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Arias Mont.
Isa. vi. 3.

Ferus.

Tostatus.

Menochius.

Ps. lxxviii. 49.

Grotius.

Tostatus.

and the blood of His saints cry to Him from the ground where it has been spilt and is heard by Him. And when we read that *he was wroth*, we are not to understand that God changes, or is moved by human passion, but that in place of tenderness and mercy man's sins bring down the just judgment before appointed as their punishment. And this punishment of sin, the rejection from the heavenly banquet, is the consequence of man's own wickedness.¹ Not because God had pre-determined to reject the Jews, but because by their sins they had cast Him off, and had rejected His rules, He sent forth His armies and destroyed them and their city. He says not army merely, but *armies*, for He is *the Lord of hosts*. The Romans who surrounded and fought against the city were one of these armies; but the famine and pestilence which, equally with the sword, fell upon this city and nation at the last, were also armies of God, the ministers for executing His will upon the ungodly. The Romans, though they knew not that they were sent by Him, were indeed His army, moved to work His will upon those who had rejected Him and had crucified His Son. But these thee, the sword, famine, and pestilence, are not the only *armies* which God sends. Of old He made use of evil angels to execute His will; for we read that, when the Egyptians oppressed His people, *He cast upon them the fierceness of His anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them*. In other parts of Holy Scripture, again, we learn that God governs the kingdoms of the earth and the elements of the world by the ministry of angels, and that by these He scatters famines and pestilences on those who sin. The destruction of Jerusalem is, indeed, but a type of that judgment which, whether for the correction or for the destruction of the sinner,² is ever being executed, and which more especially is to fall on the world itself when, after a rejection of God's call and active wickedness and resistance to His will, like that of the Jews of old, He will send forth and destroy this world.

There is a certain emphasis and significancy in this word, *their city*. It was of old His city, the place in which His

¹ "Notandum quod quando ira attribuitur Deo, non commotionem significat, sed vindictam: quia irati punire solent, unde ira punitio vocatur."—*Th. Aquinas*.

² "Est duplex ira Dei, Augustino auctore, Psalm 58, conc. 2. Est ira consummationis et ira consumptionis. Ira consummationis—id est, perfec-

tionis—illa est qua homo perficitur et consummatur virtute, cum à Deo flagellatur. Ira consumptionis illa dicitur qua consumitur et damnatur. Nam omnis vindicta Dei ira dicitur. Sed aliquando ad hoc vindicat Deus, ut perficiat; aliquando ad hoc, ut damnet."—*Barradius*.

name was, and in which He delighted, the joy of the whole earth; it is now no longer His, it is abandoned to its inhabitants, and has become *their city*. In a similar way He says, *Your house is left unto you desolate—your house*, but not Mine, for I no longer fill it by My presence. So, when the children of Israel by their sins had greatly displeased God, He speaks to Moses and says, *thy people have corrupted themselves—thy people*, but not Mine, for I no longer acknowledge them as My people. It would seem that in the same way our Blessed Lord speaks of Jerusalem, and predicts the ruin that will befall the Jews and *their city*.

Matt. xxiii.
38.Exod. xxxii.
7.
Trench.
Trench.

Let us remember, that however silent and secret the sins of men may be, they are all *heard* and noted by God, who will take account of them at the last day.

Coster

(8) *Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.*

Matt. x. 11,
13.
Acts xiii. 46.

Then—that is, when they had rejected Christ, and had refused to listen to His call. *Then*—when the sacrifice had been made, and the marriage feast was now ready. *Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready.* The whole mystery of the incarnation is accomplished—the birth, life on earth, sufferings and death on the cross of the *Bridegroom* are over; and *they which were bidden were not worthy*—had made themselves, by their sins, positively unworthy.¹ *Then*, and because of the unworthiness of the chosen people, the Gentiles were called in, though many of them will prove themselves unworthy of the grace offered them, and, following the example of these who were first called, shall be at last rejected. God made the Jews *worthy* through His call and invitation; they made themselves unworthy by their rejection of His call and by the murder of His servants and messengers, and especially by the crucifixion of His Son.

Corn. a Lap.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Konigsteyn.

Jans. Gand.

Gerhard.

These men *were not worthy*, and yet God called them. He called them, being unworthy, in order that He might make them worthy of the blessings and glory of His kingdom. And when He called the others—the Gentiles—into His

¹ “Misericordiam Suam prius offert: in eos verò qui misericordiam rejiciunt exercet justitiam. Inter has autem duas Domini virtutes hoc vel maximum discrimen est, quod misericordia gratis impenditur, justitia verò meritis irrogatur. Unde ad misericordiam impartiendam non semper requiruntur

merita recipientium: ad justitiam verò exercendam subesse prius debent culpæ reorum. Unde misericordia ex Deo est, justitia verò partim ex Deo quidem, partim ex nobis; dum peccator prius admittit culpam, et divina postmodum censura exercet vindictam.” — *Ludov. Granat.*

kingdom, to share in His banquet, He did so, not on the ground of any antecedent fitness on their part, but in order that those who obeyed His call might be made *worthy* of eternal life.

Spener.

(9) *Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.*¹

By *the highways* are meant the broad open places where people mostly congregate, whether within or without the city. Here it means outside the city, and the command to the servants is that they should go into the distant parts of the earth, there to make known the invitation to those who had not before heard of their call to the marriage feast. The servants were no longer to confine the invitation of the king to those who were bidden before, but they were now to bring in all without distinction. So did our Blessed Lord, when by His commission His Apostles went forth *into all the world, to preach the Gospel to every creature, and to teach all nations*. Christ sent them, then, into *the highways* of the world, commanding them to call in the Gentiles without distinction of nation, and to preach to all people, however remote and barbarous they might be. It is no longer in one particular place that God is to be worshipped; it is no longer one particular family or nation that is to be summoned to the banquet of God's love; but the feast is to be for all the world, both for Jews and for Gentiles.

Kuinoel.
Elsner.

Ps. xix. 4.

Emman. Sa.

Corn. & Lap.

Mark xvi. 15.
Matt. xxviii.
19.

Menochius.

Nicole.

Spener.

Ye. God ever makes use of the ministry of men in His Church, though, had He chosen, He could have called the whole world to His banquet without their aid and ministry. In sending the servants out into *the highways*, He bids them not, indeed, to pass over those who were in the city itself,

¹ "It is as common in the East for a rich man to give a feast to the poor, the maimed, and the blind, as it is in England for a nobleman to entertain men of his own degree. Does he wish to gain some temporal or spiritual blessing? he orders his head servant to prepare a feast for one or two hundred poor guests. Messengers are then despatched into the streets and lanes to inform the indigent, that on such a day rice and curry will be given to all who are there at the appointed time. Long before the hour, the visitors may be seen bending their steps towards the house of the *Rāsa*. There goes the old man who is scarcely able to move his palsied

limbs, while he talks to himself about better days; and there the despised widow moves with a hesitating step. There the *sanyāsi* or *pandāram* boldly brushes along, and scowls upon all who offer the least impediment to his progress. There objects, suffering under every possible disease of our nature, congregate together, without a single kindred association, excepting the one which occupies their expectations. The food is ready, the guests sit in rows on the grass (Luke ix. 14), and the servants begin to hand out the portions in order." *Roberts' Oriental Illustrations*. See also Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb. et Talmud*, in hoc loco.

but, with these, to call in those also who were without the city; for though the Jews were, for their sins, rejected as a nation, they were not excluded as individuals from the marriage feast, from all the benefits of the incarnation of Christ. And these servants, let us note, were commanded to bid *as many as they should find*. The servants had no power of selection granted to them. They were to call in all whom they might find, all whom their master willed, not merely those whom they themselves willed.¹ In this way we see the extent of God's mercy and the limit of the commission given to His ministers: they are to say what He puts into their mouth; they are to *bid* all those to the banquet to whom He sends His message and whom He invites.

Tostatus.

As many as ye shall find. What a duty does Christ here lay upon the ministers of His Church! He calls them to no easy work, but to one requiring constant labour. He bids them seek and strive to *find* out the guests for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and when they have found them, to *call* them in. What fasting and watching and tears and labour does this imply!

Paulus de Palacio.

(10) *So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding² was furnished with guests.*

Matt. xiii. 32, 47; xxi. 43.

In these words our Blessed Lord sets before us that which, in other parables, He represents as one of the sure characteristics of His Church. It was not only to be universal in the sense of including all nations, Jews and Gentiles, but it was also to be made up, so long as it was militant, of good and bad. The separation is not to be until hereafter. To effect this is the office of the Judge at the last day. The duty of the ministers of Christ's Church is to invite all; and the Church on earth will ever consist of those who obey God's call, and who, at the coming of Christ, shall be found worthy to enter into His glory, as well as those whom He

Gregory.

¹ " *Ite ergo ad exitus viarum*—id est, transite ad gentes per diversos errores vagantes. Christus est Via generalis, et sancti qui ducunt ad Christum viæ sunt. *Via Sion lugent* (Thren. i. 4). Item diabolus publica via est ad mortem, et viæ sunt professiones hujus mundi, professio malitiæ, professio luxuriæ, professio ludorum, quæ omnes ducunt ad diabolum, viam perditionis.

Dicit ergo, *Ite ad exitus viarum*—id est, cujuslibet conditionis homines vocate ad fidem."—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

² The wedding chamber. Thus the Syriac version reads *the house of the feast*, with which the Æthiopic agrees. The Persian version reads *the house of the nuptial feast*. The house, that is, of the Church of God.

Gerhard.

shall then reject because they possess not that love to God and man—the garment which He requires.

The servants, in obedience to their lord's command, *gathered together* as many as they found. This is the special characteristic of God and of His Church, that men are collected and *gathered together*, united by the bond of charity, and associated by being made members of one body. He invites, He makes this spiritual marriage, which, binding us to Himself, binds us also to each other. He sends out and collects those who are scattered abroad, dispersed throughout the world. On the other hand, it is Satan's work to scatter and divide, to rend the family of Christ, to dissipate the affections of men on earthly objects, to scatter the members of Christ's body over the highways of this world, and to attempt to hinder that work of re-union and of recreation which it is the work of the Church of God to effect.

Coster.

As many as they found. The *many*—all those, that is, whose hearts God had touched, and who had answered to His call. With the servants it was accident—they *found* those whom they gathered; in reality, God disposes men's hearts to accept the invitation of His love.

Tostatus.

Huré.

Menochius.

Kuinool.

Acts x. 1, 2

And those whom the servants thus gathered are described as *both bad and good*.¹ The Church, that is, is to make no distinction of persons in summoning men into the fold of Christ, for since with God there is no distinction of persons, neither must there be with the ministers of His Church. And these words assure us that though God has, because of its corporate sins, cast off the Jews as a nation from being His peculiar people, yet that He invites and receives the individuals composing that nation. The invitation to come to the marriage feast is one which includes the Gentiles; it does not, however, exclude the Jews. But who, it will naturally be asked, were the *good* who were not yet found within God's fold? Those who, without any clear knowledge of the true God—who, without the advantage of knowing His revealed will—were yet morally good, as Cornelius; those who were just to man, and who feared God, even

¹ "Quæretur quare dicitur, quod congregaverunt *omnes quoscunque invenerunt, bonos et malos*. Dicendum *primo*, quod dicitur hoc ad ostendendum, quod non erat curandum quales fuissent homines ante conversionem, sive boni sive mali, sed omnibus prædicandum erat, et omnes recipiendi erant ad fidem et conversionem. *Secundo*, ponitur hoc ad ostendendam virtutem hujus Eccle-

sie; nam non differt malos ad Ecclesiam venire, quia in ista Ecclesia sunt sacramenta, per quæ mali justificantur et efficiuntur boni: et ideo nihil nocet ad Ecclesiam venire, dum tamen vellent esse boni, quod non fit in congregatione vitæ æternæ, quia ibi non efficitur bonus, qui prius bonus non extiterit."—*Tostatus*.

though they worshipped Him ignorantly; those who were true to their higher nature and to that conscience which God has planted in all men;—these He called into His kingdom, as well as those who were grovelling in their sins and were doing deeds alien to their nature as well as to His grace. By the *bad and good* then some understand—

(1) Those who are honoured and honourable in the eyes of the world; others, however—

(2) Those who preserve an appearance of goodness in the sight of man as well as the openly profligate and profane. Both indeed need the Saviour and both are called.

(11) *And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment.*

The entrance into Christ's Church is without scrutiny; for it is beyond the power of man to do this: all are called, all are to be bidden and invited by the ministers of God, and, as we are taught in other parables, the presence of the evil is to be endured throughout this present life. The entrance into the life of glory, however, is not to be without scrutiny. Before that door is opened to man the King will take account of those who have entered in and dwelt in His Church on earth aright, and who are clad in the robe of true righteousness. As in the parable of the tares in the field, so in this parable it is the duty of the servants to gather in, not to decide on who are worthy or unworthy; since that is, as we are taught in these two parables, the exclusive prerogative of the King Himself.²

¹ "It was the usual practice among kings and princes to present to the favourite officers in their government, to ambassadors from foreign courts, to foreigners of distinction, and to men eminent for their learning, garments of greater or less value (Gen. xlv. 22, 23; Esther viii. 15). . . . In the East, at the present day, it is expected that every one who has received a garment from the king will immediately clothe himself in it and render his homage to the giver; otherwise he incurs the risk of exciting the king's displeasure. It was sometimes the case that the king, when he made a feast, presented vestments to all the guests who were invited, with which they clothed themselves before they sat down to it (2

Kings x. 22; Gen. xlv. 22; Rev. iii. 5; Cyrop. viii. 31; Iliad, xxiv. 226, 227)."—*Jahn, Archæologia Biblica.*

² A question has arisen as to whether or not it were the practice in Judæa, as it was in other parts of the East, to furnish a particular dress to every guest who came to a wedding feast. There are a sufficient number of passages both in the sacred and profane writings, as well as ample traces of such a practice in the present day in the East, to make it at least likely that this was the case. But, in fact, nothing turns on this custom. Nor are we told that the king supplied a garment to each guest. The indifference or obstinacy of the guest was, however, much the same, whether we suppose that he

Acts xvii. 23.

Salmeron.

Tostatus.

Emm. ab
Incaruat.2 Cor. v. 3.
Eph. iv. 24.
Col. iii. 10, 12.
Rev. iii. 4;
xvi. 15;
xix. 8.
Ecd. ii. 38, 39.

Theophylact.

Trengh.

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Ps. xxx. 7;
lxxxix. 46
Isa. i. 15.

Gen. xviii. 20,
24.

Tostatus.

Trench.

Gerhard.

Tirinus.
Einman. 82.

Jans. Gand.

Augustine.

When the king came in. This does not imply that God is ever absent, but He is said to come into the heart when He searches it out and reveals its sinfulness. In the same manner God is said to *hide His face* when He will not succour the sinner, or when He endures sin without cutting off the transgressors; so when God said, *Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it,* He did so by sending two angels, not merely to see, but to be the ministers of His vengeance against a sinful people. So again, when we read, *Why art Thou absent from us so long, and why is Thy wrath so hot against the sheep of Thy pasture,* the simple meaning is, Why dost Thou not succour us? God is ever entering in—that is, He is always examining our heart to find this test of our faith and sincerity. He comes in every trial, in all remorse because of sin. And all these tests and examinations are but so many foreshadows of the last judgment, so many ways in which God reminds us of that searching of the heart and life which will be the work of the last great day. So that this coming in of the king is especially an image of what will take place at the great day of account, the general judgment.

He saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment. It was a man, a single sinner; thus reminding us that, however great the crowd of transgressors, yet God sees each individual sinner, and that none are hidden from His eyes.¹ And this *wedding garment* is not a mere belief in Christ, nor baptism, for by these we all enter in at the first. It is something which only God, the Great King, can note: it is something which concerns the heart and life. It was something, as in this case, which the *servants* had not seen, or could not note; something of which, because it was hidden from the eye of man, only *the King Himself* could take account. Many guests had assembled, but we are not told that they observed the defects of this man. The king's presence made

had a dress offered to him and then refused to take it, or having the means himself of coming in a fitting attire he neglected to do so.

¹ "It is a dark problem how the king, when he came to see the guests, found but *one* without a wedding garment. Answer may be that all reprobate sinners are called *one*, because they will be of one kind, namely, faithless: or *one*, because the root of all sin did proceed from one: or *one*, because he

that faileth in one point is guilty of all: or *one*, to show the quick sight of God, who can, if there be but one hypocrite among them, soon spy him: or *one*, because many such hypocrites are less esteemed than one righteous man; *One that is just is better than a thousand ungodly children* (Ecclus. xvi. 3): or *one*, to show that at Christ's own table there was one Judas among the blessed Apostles, as some construe it."—Dean Boys.

evident the absence of the wedding garment, as the light of God's presence reveals to us all our selfishness. The guests did not note it. Those who are worthy to be admitted to the feast which Christ has prepared know their own selfishness, see their own guilt, but concern not themselves with the sins of others.

Emm. ab
Incaruat.

By the *wedding garment* then is figured that righteousness of Christ which is implanted in us by virtue of our union with Him—holiness of life. This righteousness is the root of living faith and the flower of true charity. It is that grace which is given us by God, and which He offers to all men; that living faith which is implanted by God, and which bears fruit in the lives of His faithful children. In brief, it is a life and conversation arising out of our union with Christ, manifesting itself in the bringing forth of those good works which are the fulfilment of the law and the Gospel—that true love to God and man, which as a garment betokens our adherence to Christ, and is His livery.¹ And this robe of righteousness, viewed in its outward aspect, and as it may be seen of men, consists of these four particulars:—

Bengel.
Stier.
Trench.

Spener.

Hofmeister.

Jerome.
Ælfric.

(1) Purity of our outer life,—temperance, sobriety, and chastity.

(2) Obedience to all the commandments of God, which is the evidence of our love to Him.

(3) Patience in the midst of adversity, to which we are exhorted in Christ's own words, *In your patience possess ye your souls.*

Luke xxi. 19.

(4) In love to the brethren, the members with us of the body of Christ.

Peraldus.

Obedience to the whole law of Christ, that love towards God and man, which is shown in our keeping the commandments of God, is called *a wedding garment*²—

(1) Because the strength to keep that love which is given us comes from the incarnation, the union of Christ with our nature.

(2) Because without this love we cannot be admitted to union with Christ in glory.

Voragine.

¹ "Touching this man wanting a wedding garment, as Chrysostom and Origen, so all the Fathers have ever expounded it of an unreformed life, or, with Gregory, of the want of love, which is in effect the same. It is not, therefore, to be understood of faith—for to believe is to come in to the wedding—but of that effect which a saving faith always worketh; that is, purity of heart and life: so that in whom this

is wanting he shall be cast into utter darkness, notwithstanding his embracing of the faith of Christ."—*Mayer*. So also Peraldus, "Loquitur Christus habenti fidem, non charitatem."

² "La robe nuptiale, ce sont les œuvres commandées par la loi de Jésus. Tous sont appelés à s'en revêtir, mais combien peu s'en revêtent effectivement."—*Le Mennais*.

Topiarus.

Alex. Nat.

Rom. xiii. 14.
Gal. iii. 27.
Eph. iv. 22—
24.
Col. iii. 9, 10.

Titelmann.

Nicole.

This *wedding garment* we have given^e us when we are united to Christ; for as in a marriage the goods of the husband are those of the wife also, so in the marriage of Christ with the soul of the believer the good things of Christ—His righteousness, His sanctification, His love—are shared in by all who are united to Him. But it is not the good things of Christ only; it is Christ Himself, whom we are bidden to put on in our baptism. For since Christ is called the priest and the sacrifice, as He is also the altar and the temple—for He is foreshadowed by these types, no one thing being able to be compared with Him—so in this place He is the bridegroom, the bridal feast, and the wedding garment. The bridegroom, since He is wedded to His Church, which was taken from His side, as Eve from the side of Adam: the bridal feast, since it is His body and His blood which are strengthening food to His true disciples: the *wedding garment*, since as many as believe in Him, and are united to Him, He covers with His robe of righteousness, blessing them not outwardly merely, but inwardly also, communicating to them of His righteousness,—not merely, that is, hiding their sins, but cleansing and putting them away.¹

Let us bear in mind the teaching of this part of the parable:—

(1) Not all who come into Christ's Church, and sit down with the rest of the guests at His supper, are worthy, and will be accepted by Him.

(2) This man was expelled not because he had no robe, but because he had not the right one. The ordinary easy way of living in the world is not sufficient for those who would come to the *marriage* supper of the Lamb. We require holiness of life, the robe which God has appointed for all who would enter into the Church triumphant.

As the Holy Communion of Christ's body and blood is not only a heavenly banquet, but also the figure of the marriage feast of the Lamb, so is this parable a lesson and warning to all those who would come there. It is a lesson

¹ "Quæ est vestis nuptialis? Baptismus est? Sine baptismo quidem nemo ad Deum pervenit: sed non omnis qui habet baptismum ad Deum pervenit. Non ergo possum intelligere baptismum esse vestem nuptialem,—id est, ipsum sacramentum; quam vestem video in bonis, video in malis. Forte altare est, vel quod accipitur de altari? Videmus quia multi manducant, et iudicium sibi manducant et bibunt. Quid ergo est? Jejunant? Jejunant

et mali. Ad Ecclesiam concurritur? concurrunt et mali. Postremo, miracula fiunt? Non solum boni faciunt et mali, sed aliquando non faciunt boni. Quæ est ergo vestis illa nuptialis? *Finis præcepti est charitas de corde puro et conscientia bona et fide non ficta* [1 Tim. i. 5]. Hæc est vestis nuptialis. Interrogate vos, si habetis illam; securi estis in convivio Domini."—*Augustine*.

telling them that all are invited and called thereto: it is at the same time a warning that none come without due preparation of the heart and life without righteousness or true penitence for sin.¹

(12) *And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having² a wedding garment? And he was speechless.*

This man was a *friend*, because of the faith which he professed, though a reprobate by the works which he practised. The king called him *friend*, as though he would say, I have not hated thee, but thou hast rejected me, and the casting out from this wedding feast is the act of justice, not of indignation, for thou art a *friend*. Whilst the Eternal King hates the sin, He yet loves and would have mercy on the sinner. In the Gospel we are taught this great truth, that those who are cast out of the kingdom of God and banished from His presence rather cast themselves out by their enmity to God than are rejected by God, who loves them still, and would that every sinner should repent and enter into His kingdom. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways.* The inexpressible tenderness of God to the sinner is shown by this word *friend*. It is the pleading of Almighty Love. Thou for whom I have done such great things: to whom I have taught the way of holiness, and for whom I have endured so much: for whose good I have made all things in this world: for whom I have given the Scriptures, which reveal My will, and have endured so great sufferings from the hands of men: for whom I have done so many miracles, and have wrought all things needful for thy salvation: *friend*, why hast thou rejected Me?³

How camest thou in hither? that is, How didst thou dare

¹ "Si crimen est ingredi sine veste, quantum erit manere in domo, versari, discumbere, perseverare!"—*Paulus de Palacio*.

² "We may observe that it is the subjective, not the objective, particle of negation which is here used, μή and not οὐ—μή ἔχων ἱνδύμα γάμου, not having and knowing that thou hast not the wedding garment, with a consciousness that it was wanting."—*Trench*.

³ "Mon ami, par la vocation; qui devenez mon ennemi en la mépri-

sant."—*Bossuet*. "*Amice*, debiti obligatione, sed non solutione. *Amice* fidei participatione, sed non operatione. *Amice* nomine, non re. *Quomodo huc intrasti?* Sacramenta Ecclesiæ suscipiendo, fidem Ecclesiæ confitendo, non habens vestem nuptialem, totum factis negando (Tit. i. 16)." — *Gorranus*. "*Amice*, pro quo feci creaturas, dixi Scripturas, sustinui pœnas; feci mirabilia, dixi utilia, sustinui crudelia." — *Peraldus*.

Ælfric.

Coster.

Emman. Sâ.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Jerome.

Ezek. xxxiii.
11.

Alvernus.

Gerhard.

Peraldus.

Ludolph.

Gorranus.

Luke xv. 18,

19.

Luke xviii.

18.

Paulus de

Palacio.

Tostatus.

Hugo de S.

Claro.

Gregory.

Matt. Faber.

to enter here—into my presence—without the preparation required from all? How is it that thou bearest the name of Christian, and yet showest forth none of the works which befit the Christian? *Thou*—for God's call and God's judgments do not merely concern a nation of sinners; He singles out the individual, and, as He speaks to the heart of every one, and moves each sinner to repentance, so does He see, reprove, and judge each sinner singly. To the demand of the king *he was speechless*, because of the truth of the accusation, from shame at the sight of his sin, and from utter inability to find any excuse for his presumption. It was too late now to cry, *I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son*. He cannot now, as the publican, beat upon his breast and say, *God be merciful to me a sinner*. It is no longer the time of prayer, for now the judgment has commenced.

When God searches the heart of man, He not only sees and knows all, but He makes the sinner also feel the unreality of all those lying excuses by which he has soothed himself whilst in the midst of his sins. When all is *speechless*, when the heart cannot utter deceit, and the mouth is silent, when no excuse is heard, then will conscience loudly accuse us because of our past ungodliness. In the silence of the day of judgment all excuses will die away and be forgotten. We shall not then remember to plead the hindrances of our life and the nature of our occupation for continuing in sin. We shall not venture to excuse ourselves by alleging the provocation which we received from others, but shall remember only that we were a cause of provocation to others, and so be *speechless*. We shall not plead the temptation which we received, but only remember that we ourselves were a temptation to others, and so be *speechless*.¹

And as the question which God will ask of every one at the last day will concern the talent and gift committed to his care in this life, let the ministers of God remember what that inquiry will be as regards themselves. The Judge will then ask—

- a. *How camest thou in to the ministry of My Church?*
By gift, by simony, or by My call and providence?
By mammon or by God?
- β. *To what camest thou?* To labour for Me and for souls, or for thine own ease, and to procure honour and the respect of men?
- γ. *By what door camest thou in?* By that which I have

¹ "Ubi Veritas ipsa Judex erit, cessabit omnis excusatio, palliatio, ac defensio."—*Jansen Yp.*

appointed, or by some other of thine own devising ; not through Me, and by the way which I have ordained ? *How* hast thou lived, and what example hast thou afforded to those committed to thy charge ? Hast thou lived as a bishop, as a priest, as a deacon of My Church should have lived, or as a mere man of the world, as a merchant, a shopkeeper, or farmer, feeding thyself, and caring only to do this, and not to feed My flock ?

John x. 1—7.

8. *How*—with what food, what doctrine, what example—hast thou fed that flock over which the Holy Ghost has made thee an overseer ? Hast thou kept it from those grievous wolves which I forewarned thee would endeavour to devour the flock ? *Where is the flock which was given thee, thy beautiful flock ?*

Acts xx. 28.
Hugo de S.
Charo.
Peraldus.
John x. 12.
Acts xx. 29.
Jer. xlii. 20.

(13) *Then said the king to the servants,¹ Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matt. viii. 12 ;
xiii. 42 ;
xxiv. 51.

Then—when the guest was mute, when he refused to acknowledge his fault, and to ask pardon of the king—*then*, the command went forth to the servants to *take him away, and cast him into outer darkness.*²

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

It may be that these corporeal figures—the hands and the feet which are to be bound, the tears which will then be shed, and the gnashing of teeth—are made use of in order to remind us of the great truth that we shall rise again in our bodies. Bind the *feet*, which have so daringly intruded without preparation to the banquet. Bind the *hands*, which have refused to robe him with the festal garments.

Jerome.
Cyril.

But be this as it may, by the *hands* of the soul are meant the powers and faculties of the soul, by which it is able

¹ Not δούλοι, as in verses 3, 4, 6, 8, but διάκονοι. “Non servis per quos vocaverat ad nuptias, sed ministris qui ministrabant discumbentibus. Hi Dei ministri sunt angeli sancti.”—*Emmanuel ab Incarnations.*

² “In the terms of the command to inflict the proper punishment on the undeserving guest mention is made of the darkness which was without : the primary sense of which allusion is obviously to be explained by a reference to the time and circumstances under which the celebration of a fes-

tivity, like that of a wedding, especially in the East, would necessarily take place ; for that time would of course be the evening, and when the night was somewhat advanced ; and the festivity being celebrated, by the light of lamps or torches, in the guest-chamber appropriated to the occasion, while there was the lightness of the day within, for the benefit of the inmates of that chamber, there would be the darkness of night without, to all such as were excluded from it.”—*Greswell.*

to do good or evil; by the *feet* are meant the affections of our nature, which lead us to or from true good. These hands and feet are free: we have free will to do God's commandment or to work unrighteousness; but when we are enslaved to evil and given over to the service of Satan, then the hands and feet of the soul are bound and unable to do that which is right. As, then, sin binds the soul here, as when given over to wickedness we bind our own *hands and feet*, and as our punishment is the fruit of our sin, so in the next world will that be continued to us which here we have chosen. The *feet*, which have never visited the sick in their affliction, but have trodden the way of evil; the *hands*, which have never ministered to the necessities of the poor, but have been full of blood and violence—will then be bound so that they may no longer work evil, and will even be prevented from good, for our time of probation will then have passed away. Here things may be changed: here the members may be moved: now we may repent, and turn from the evil of our ways; but there all is unchangeable—the affections and desires and habits with which a man has gone from this life will remain his for ever. And the punishment which then befalls us we shall be powerless to resist; we shall be bound and helpless in our misery, and unable to escape the judgments of God.

Rainssant.
Toplarius.
Rab. Maurus.
Tostatus.
Theophylact.
Nicole.
Corn. & Lap.

In these words, *bind him hand and foot*, we are taught—

(1) That in the execution of the sentence there will be no deliverance within the power of the sinner. He that is bound cannot free himself.¹

(2) We learn the nature of the punishment caused by sin. It will consist in the continuance of the sin itself which in our self-will we have chosen, so that our sin will be our punishment.² It is the perpetual binding of the powers of the soul to that evil which we have deliberately preferred in this life.

Arias Mont.

¹ "Reo ligantur manus, ne se ullo modo defendere possit; pedes verò, ne effugere valeat."—*Emm. ab Incarnatione.*

² "Leurs pieds sont liés, parce que leurs affections deviennent immobiles et invariables. Il y a toujours en cette vie quelque sorte de flexibilité dans la volonté des plus méchants; mais l'autre vie étant incapable de changement, la volonté des hommes y devient roide et inflexible. Ce qu'ils aiment, ils l'aimeront toujours; et ce qu'ils n'ont point aimé, ils ne l'aimeront jamais. Ainsi les méchants seront attachés au mal par

un lien indissoluble, et séparés pour jamais de l'amour du bien. Ce sont là ces liens qui leur garrottent les pieds, c'est-à-dire leurs affections; et ils ne sont pas moins dans l'impuissance de faire de bonnes œuvres figurées par les mains: une nuit obscure, qui les prive de toute lumière, les privant aussi de toutes les œuvres de justice; qui est marqué par ces paroles de Jésus-Christ: *La nuit vient, dans laquelle personne ne peut agir* (Jean ix. 4). Aussi ils n'ont pas les mains moins liées que les pieds."—*Nicole sur les Évangiles.*

Cast him into outer darkness—that is, into the profoundest darkness, and at the furthest distance from Him who is emphatically *the true Light*. The inner darkness is that which the sinner gathers around himself, the darkness of the heart, the rejection of grace, the extinction of light, and separation from God in this world; the *outer darkness* is a symbol of that inner darkness of the sinner's soul where are despair and a reproaching conscience, in that place where the light of God's presence cannot come, at the utmost distance from the light of God's presence and the joys of His kingdom—that is, without the Church of God.¹ The wicked will thus, by compulsion, suffer in *outer darkness*, or rather will endure profound darkness whilst away from God and at a distance from His light, because they have wilfully and deliberately chosen such moral darkness. So that whilst the inner darkness of this life is man's voluntary guilt, the *outer darkness*, whether of this life or of the world to come, is involuntary loss and suffering. Here the sinner has, by a career of wickedness, gathered darkness within himself; there it will be also without him, and the eyes of the spirit will then be opened, so that he may see the wretchedness of his life and the effect and consequence of his sins.

Gerhard.

Lamy.

John 1. 9.

Bredembach.

Toplarus.

P. Lombard,
lib. iv. dist.
60.

Ælfrie.

Simon de
Cassia.

Coster.

Let us remember that though these are corporeal images, and the binding of hands and feet and casting into outer darkness are figures, they are figures of a truth, the substance of which must needs exceed the shadow.² And again, it is ever to be borne in mind that that which follows from the nature of things, and which was intended to keep men in the paths of happiness through fear of the consequences of sin, is an act of love and mercy; and that when this becomes the punishment of the sinner who, in despite of the consequences, has chosen the path of sin, this provision of man's nature is called His act who has ordained that course which we call nature.

In these words, then, and in the command to bind the man

¹ Here the casting out, let it be noted, is from *the dinner* prepared by God. Primarily, the expulsion of the Jews, who sought not admission by the righteousness which is of Christ; and secondly, of the individual who enters not into the fold by *the door*, or the way appointed by Christ. However true it may be that this casting out is a symbol of utter rejection, yet here it is spoken of a temporary, though spiritual, loss and expulsion.

² “Mittitur miser in tenebras exteriores, ubi erit fletus et stridor dentium, —hoc est, in Orcum, ubi tenebræ, et summus dolor, summumque est tormentum. A tenebris et cum tenebris transeunt impii ad tenebras. A tenebris et cum tenebris peccatorum quas voluntarii ferunt ad tenebras quas inviti ferent. Illic damnatus invitus projecitur in noctem damnationis, qui hic sponte cecidit in cæcitatem cordis.”—*Barradius*.

who has come without a wedding garment and to cast him into outer darkness, we are taught—

(1) That when our time of probation has expired there is no longer a possibility of our return to grace.

(2) That the sinner will then be excluded from glory, cast out from the marriage feast.

Alb. Magnus.

(3) That man's lot, when so rejected, will be one of pain and torment, figured by the *weeping and gnashing of teeth*:¹ *weeping* at the sight of present misery, and *gnashing of teeth* because of the folly which has bartered heaven for the pleasures which have now wholly passed away.

Bredembach.

Matt. xx. 16.

(14) *For many are called, but few are chosen.*

1 Pet. iii. 19,
20.

Matt. Faber.

Gen. xix.

Coster.

Gorranus.

1 Cor. x. 5.
Heb. iii. 7—
19

Jude 5.
Numb. xiv.
22—24.

Hugo de S.
Claro.

Judges vii. 3,
7.

The truth of these words is seen in the history of the world from the beginning, and especially in the records of God's chosen nation, the Jews. When the wickedness of man had become great on the earth, God called the whole world to repentance and salvation by the preaching of Noah; but of all those to whom his words were addressed, only eight persons obeyed that call, and were, consequently, chosen to enter into the ark. In Sodom, again, all were *called* to repentance, all were warned of the coming judgment; but of all these only Lot and two of his daughters were saved from the destruction of the city. But we may see this fact especially exemplified in the history of the Jews. These were all *called* to possess a kingdom and a country appointed by God for them, but, of these, *few* only were *chosen*. They were all brought out of Egypt, *but with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness*. This declaration, again, was fulfilled in the case of those twelve who were sent out to examine the Land of Promise. All were *called*, but of them only two were *chosen* to go in and possess that good land. The same truth was in some sort evidenced in the case of the thirty and two thousand men of Gideon's army who were *called* to God's service, but of whom only three hundred were *chosen* to be helpers

¹ "These words refer literally to the prisons in Judæa, and figuratively to the feelings of those who at the last day are driven from the presence of the Light. "Causa hujus stridoris dentium et frigiditatis magnæ præcedentis erat indispositio loci, quia carceres erant semper subterranei in terra Chanaan, et erat ibi aqua et lutum, et ex illis causabatur frigiditas, et omne malum. Sic

patet Jerem. trigesimo octavo; ubi Jeremias positus est in carcere, et dicitur: *Tulerunt Jeremiam et projecerunt eum in lacum Melciæ filii Amalec, qui erat in vestibulo carceris: et submiserunt Jeremiam funibus in lacum, in quo non erat aqua, sed lutum: descendit itaque Jeremias in lutum. Et ita erant alii carceres.*"—*Tostatus*.

and sharers in the victory over the Midianites. So true is it, according to the words of the Apostle, that, though *they which run in a race run all, yet but one receiveth the prize.*

Trench.
Hugo de S.
Charo.
1 Cor. ix. 24.

All are called to whom the Gospel is preached, but of these comparatively *few* accept the offers of mercy and enter God's Church; and of these, again, many begin to walk aright who do not persevere in that Christian course, but fall away from their first faith, and cease to live as God's children should. *Many* begin the work of conversion from sin; but whilst only *few* persevere, *many* fall away.¹

Lindolph.
Tostatus.

The lessons which we are taught in this parable may, then, be summed up in these particulars:—

(1) We see the care, long-suffering, and love of God to us. Notwithstanding our indifference, He calls us repeatedly into His kingdom.

(2) That not by any natural inability, nor by any failure on God's part, but both by his own sloth and indifference, and also by his active sin, is man hindered from obeying the repeated calls of his Maker and Ruler.

(3) We may see the severity with which God will regard those who make profession of their obedience and yet do not walk worthy of their vocation: they will be cast out.

Avendaño.

There is a tendency at times, and in some minds, to make light of the threatenings of God's law: there is at other times, and in other minds, a proneness to exaggerate these threatenings; and the recoil from this latter produces the former. In strictness, then, let us note that our Blessed Lord does not say *many* come to the marriage feast—*many*, that is, enter into God's Church who, in the end, are not chosen, however true this may be—but He says *many are called* and invited to come in; that of this large number, all mankind, *many* do not come in, and of those who come in some, as the parable teaches us, are rejected. Whatever warning there may be in the awful fact that *many* who have entered into Christ's militant Church are yet rejected at the last because of their sins, this is not given in these words, which only state that *many* who are called, by any of the calls of God, whether of nature or of revelation, are yet, for one reason or another, not chosen.

Let us all remember that *many*, that all, are called by

¹ "Utrò vocantur omnes; sed electi non sunt, nisi qui vocati parent, quique usque in finem respondent divinæ erga se beneficentiæ, in pietatis Evangelicæ studio perseverantes. Theophylactus ait: Pauci enim qui salvantur et qui

digni ut elegantur à Deo: ita ut Dei quidem sit vocare; electos autem fieri, vel non, nostrum est. Id quod rectè quidem à Theophylacto dictum est, si quis rectè interpretetur."—*Bredembach.*

God, and, therefore, that He gives sufficient grace to all to fulfil His will. But whilst all are called, we are also reminded in this parable that none could come to God unless called by Him. The beginning of all faith is from Him alone.

Lienard.

* * * “Domine Jesu Christe, Rex cœlestis gloriæ, qui nos per nuncios Tuos—scilicet per Sacram Scripturam, infirmitates, periculum vivendi, mutationem fortunæ, et gratuitam voluntatem—ad nuptias Tuas vocasti, da nobis charitatis vestem nuptialem, ne à

confessione peccati et à laude Dei unquam obmutescamus, ne à resurrectione spiritualis gaudii, scilicet pace et securitate, separemur; et da nobis vestem pietatis et bonæ operationis, ne ligatis manibus et pedibus in tenebras exteriores mittamur. Amen.”—*Ludolph.*

THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. JOHN IV. 46—54.

(46) *There was a certain nobleman,¹ whose son was sick at Capernaum.*

A certain nobleman—a courtier or servant, that is, of King Herod, in whose household we know were to be found followers of Christ. Thus *Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward*, is mentioned among the women who ministered unto Christ; and *Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch*, was among the teachers of the infant Church. This fact, it may be, supplies a meaning to the words of the Evangelist, *when Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by Him*, such as had been wrought for this courtier or member of his household. Some indeed have conjectured that the *nobleman* was either Chuza, the steward of Herod, or Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod Antipas. Be

Luke viii. 3.

Acts xiii. 1.
Hengstenberg.

Luke xxiii. 8.

¹ Βασιλικός. — This word properly means a servant or courtier of King Herod. It does not imply, as some have supposed, any hereditary rank or dignity: nor, again, does it mean that the *nobleman* was of royal extraction. Josephus makes use of the word to distinguish between the attendants or members of the suite of the king and those of Cæsar. (Josephus, Bel. Jud. vii. 5, 2; Antiq. xv. 8, 4.) Dr. Fredk. Münter has, in a dissertation inserted in the "Miscellanea Hafnensia Theologici et Philologici Argumenti" (tom. i. fascic. i.), Copenhag. 1816, examined the subject with much learned minuteness, and cites an inscription from Egypt written in the Hellenistic dialect of the New Testament, where

Ἀρτεμιδῶρος is styled Πτολεμαίου βασιλικός, the servant or courtier of Ptolemy. Compare with these the various readings of the word in the Peschito Syriac, the Ethiopic, Armenian, Georgian, Slavonic, Coptic, both in the Sahidic and Memphitic versions, the Anglo-Saxon, Arabic, and Persian, in Mr. Malan's "Gospel according to St. John" (London, 1862). In the Anglo-Saxon version βασιλικός is translated "under-cyning," which Wycliffe has rendered "litol king" in his sermon, and Tyndale "rueler." See also Kuinoel in loco, Kreb's "Observationes Flavianæ," and Wiseman's "Connexion of Sacred and Profane Literature," vol. ii. pp. 135-137.

Bengel.

that as it may, this *nobleman* came to Christ in order that He might heal his *son*, his only son (*ó viós*) as it would seem.

In various manners does God draw men to Him, at one time by the sense of their need, at another by the testimony of His power and by the proofs of His love.¹

Sylvester.

Our Blessed Lord had, about a twelvemonth before, wrought a miracle in Cana—the first which He worked in that country—when He changed the water into wine at the marriage feast. Now He goes to reap the harvest of that seed which He had sown, and to confirm by His presence the faith which His former miracle had caused to spring up.

Chrysostom.

The whole history, indeed, of this present miracle sets before us the beginning, the growth, and the perfection of faith. For just as the seed sown in the earth has its beginning when it germinates, its growth when it sends forth a stalk, and comes to full maturity when the fruit is ripe, so is it with the seed of faith in the heart of man. Necessity—the illness of his son—made the seed of faith to germinate in the soul of this *nobleman*. He knew of Christ: he had heard of, or, it may be, had even seen some of His mighty works. And this knowledge our Blessed Lord quickened and strengthened by His declaration of the recovery of the son of the *nobleman*, whilst the miracle attested by his servants brought it, by Divine grace, to perfection.

Toplarius.

Adversity and sufferings are not only the means by which man is oftentimes drawn from the world and brought to God, they are the very tokens of His love for us, and of His readiness to have mercy upon us.²

Hartung.

(47) *When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judæa into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.*

The report of Christ's miracles was *heard* by this nobleman; he had heard not merely of that one which had been wrought

¹ "Deus omnes vult et omnes quærit, alios uno modo, alios autem alio, pro necessitatis cujusque ratione: alios quidem per labores attrahit, alios verò per favores et delicias."—*Ph. Diez*.

² "Ad Christum accurrimus cum nos premit adversitas, et ideo eas Deus immittit, ergo mitius tolerandæ sunt."—*Avancinus*.

"Vix aliud certiùs esse solet divini amoris indicium, quàm corporis infir-

mitas, ex qua ultro suscepta ipsemet Dei Filius amores suos contestari voluit, quum languores nostros Ipse tulit, Ipse infirmitates nostras portavit (Is. liii. 4) docuit que idem esse infirmari quod amari, prout piæ sorores Martha et Magdalena agnovere, ideoque pro ægriente fratre suo Lazaro ad animorum corporumque medicum scripsere: *Ecce quem amas infirmatur.* Joan. xi. 3."—*Hartung*.

in *Cana of Galilee* at the marriage feast, but also of those which He had done at Jerusalem, and of which Nicodemus said, *No man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him*, and these encouraged him to come to Christ for the healing of his son. *He besought Him that He would come down.* Cana was on a height compared with Capernaum, which was by the border of the Sea of Galilee; hence the usual phrase of going down to it. The nobleman was importunate that Christ should come at once,¹ because his son *was at the point of death*; all means, it would seem, had been tried, and the father felt that medicine was of no avail to restore his son to health. Humanly speaking, *he was at the point of death*, and this had brought the father to Christ. In this we have a proof of the reality and of the greatness of the miracle which Jesus wrought. In this prayer, however, that our Blessed Lord would *come down* with him, the *nobleman* showed that his faith in Christ was deficient. He had heard of His power to heal, but he did not believe that the power could be exerted unless He were present with the sick.

John III. 2.

Konigsteyn.

Lamy.

Royard.

Toletus.

Gregory.

The sense of the loss which impended over him—the fear of his son's death—drew this *nobleman* to Christ. Adversity and the sense of trial oftentimes bring the rich and prosperous to the throne of God, whilst prosperity hinders most men, and rarely assists in drawing the soul of any one to its Maker. Sufferings are necessary for that end. When the waters of the Deluge had increased over the face of the world, they bore the ark in safety and lifted it up towards heaven; so also the trials of life—the waters of sorrow and suffering—are means to bear us upwards to God and to lift us nearer to His throne.² *Man being in honour*, and surrounded by prosperity, *hath no understanding*, but in his neglect of

Nicole.

Stapleton.

¹ “Abi ergo, ô bone Christiane, et tu itidem fac. Si ad Deum accedere vis, Ejus gratiam et auxilium impetrare; depone et domi relinque quibus homines fidunt,—bona temporalia, potentiam, honorem, divitias, etc. Nec propriæ præfidæ justitiæ: pone philautiam: Dei potissimum fidas gratiæ, ita nudum te coram Illo statues: indica Illi necessitatem tuam in bona ac pia fiducia: effunde coram Illo animam tuam. . . . Etsi enim filium ægrotum non habes, animam tuam ægrotam habes, quæ multò majoris momenti est. Quapropter semper dicas, *Domine, veni antequam filius meus*—anima mea

—moriatur.” — *Ferus in Conciones Evan. Dom.*

² “Felix necessitas quæ ad meliora compellit.” — *Topiarius*. “On ne voit guère d'exemples de personnes à qui la prospérité ait été une occasion de se convertir à Dieu: parce que la prospérité attache à la créature, et que l'attache à la créature fait oublier Dieu. Elle ne corrompt pas toujours les gens de bien; mais il est rare qu'elle change les méchants. Dieu se sert au contraire souvent de l'adversité pour changer leur cœur; ou Il les sépare des créatures qui avaient été l'objet de leur attache, ou Il leur en

Ps. xlix. 20. God is compared unto the beasts that perish. It is when adversity comes, and the nature of earthly honours is evidenced, that the soul lifts up its eyes unto heaven, and understanding returns to it, and it seeks after God.¹

Dan. iv. 24.
Coppenstein.

John ii. 18.
1 Cor. i. 22. (48) Then said Jesus unto him, *Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.*

Theophylact. Our Blessed Lord here contrasts the want of faith of those amongst whom He now was with that of the people of Sychar. The people of Galilee, in whose country He had worked His miracle of changing the water into wine, still required *signs and wonders* in order that they might believe, whilst the Samaritans had believed simply through His teaching (*διὰ τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ*). For the rebuke is not one addressed to the *nobleman* only who urged Him to return with him to Capernaum; it was spoken to, and referred to, the whole body of the people who surrounded Him—*Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe*. In the use of this word *ye*, Christ shows us also that the miracles which He wrought were not done for the benefit merely of those who were healed, or who had in other ways received the tokens of His mercy in their own persons; His *signs and wonders* were for all; and those who were now gathered around Him—the whole people of Cana—received that which would strengthen their faith as much as the father of the sick child.

Jansen p.
Kuinoel.
John iv. 41.
Topiarus.
Boys.

Signs and wonders are thus distinguished. Both are things done by some means beyond that of mere natural power. A *sign*, however, is something done without the intervention of natural means, which yet, with the aid of those means, is of common occurrence: for instance, to heal the sick by means of medicine is of common occurrence, but to heal without the use of such means is a *sign* of the presence

fait connoître l'instabilité. La privation diminue leur passion, et les porte à chercher un autre bien. La crainte de perdre ce qu'ils possèdent, en les obligeant de recourir à Dieu, leur fait au moins reconnoître Sa puissance souveraine; et souvent après avoir connu le pouvoir de Dieu, on vient à L'aimer."—*Nicole sur les Évangiles.*

¹ "Comparantur tribulationes calcariis, quibus stimulantur equi, sagittis quibus incitantur cervi. 'Tribulationes calcaria sunt' inquit S. Thom. Villanovanus, quæ faciunt nos currere ad

Deum 'ita currere doctus est Saulus, cum cœlitus audiret: *difficile est tibi contra stimulum calcitrare*; ita currere' didicit S. Augustinus, qui de se: 'punctus tribulatione cœpi quærere refugium' [in Psal. xciv.]. Tribulationes sagittæ sunt, quibus confixus David; *sagittæ tuæ infixæ sunt mihi*; cervorum sibi pedes sensit accrevisse; *per fecit pedes meos tanquam cervorum* [Ps. xxxviii. 3], ideoque ad Deum anhelat: *quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita desiderat anima mea ad te Deus* [Ps. xlii. 2]."—*Hartung.*

of some higher power than that of medical skill. A *wonder*, however, is not only something done by a power beyond that of nature, but is in itself out of the course of nature: as, for instance, to give sight to one born blind, or to raise the dead.¹ And let us note that our Blessed Lord does not say that *signs and wonders* must necessarily overpower the unbelief of man's heart and compel him to believe, but merely that the temper and disposition of these people were such that they would not believe without these *signs and wonders*. Men, indeed, as was proved so often during the period of Christ's own ministry upon earth, often refuse to be convinced even by the greatest *signs* and the most mighty *wonders*. Nay, such often harden the heart. It was after the display of His greatest acts of mercy, His mightiest miracles, that the Pharisees were the most earnest in rejecting and destroying Him. The miracle which is needed is that which enables the heart to recognise the power by which the physical miracle is wrought.

Euthymius.
Theophylact.Schiller-
macher.

Newman.

The father possessed a certain, though but a small, amount of faith. That he possessed some was shown in his coming to Christ. His love for his son led him to come to the Saviour, though he only had a feeble faith in Christ's power. The fact of his possessing some amount of belief is apparent from his coming at all, and also by his words—*come down and heal my son*. How small, how feeble it was, is shown in this, that it only extended to the belief that if Christ were present He could cure his son. He did not comprehend that the power of Christ was such that He could heal although at a distance from the sick child. Our Blessed Lord healed the son without coming, and thus showed that His power was not bounded by space—that He was not only omnipotent, but that He was also omnipresent.²

Cajetan.

Trench.

Lienard.

¹ “*Signa* dicit miracula minora, *prodigia* majora. Vel *signa* dicit miracula facta; *prodigia* autem prophetica dicta. Prodigium enim, ut dicit Augustinus, dicitur quasi proditium, quod, scilicet, porro dicat; vel porro significet et aliquid futurum esse portendat. Vel aliter, signum respicit excellentiam virtutis operantis; prodigium autem contrarietatem eminentem à cursu naturæ nobis consuetæ.”—*Hugo de S. Charo*. “*Signa* miracula sunt secundum naturam, ut infirmi curatio. *Prodigia* quæ præter et supra naturam, ut cæci illuminatio, mortui suscitatio.”—*Gregorius*. “*Origenes* vero inquit ea quæ præter opinionem sunt, et humanam consuetudinem

excedunt, *τίπαρα*, *prodigia*; quæ autem aliquid significant *σημεῖα*, *signa*, vocari.”—*Maldonatus*. “*Τίπαρ*, then, is the extraordinary manifestation in itself, but *σημεῖον* points to its internal significance; with which it well consists that things not in themselves miraculous may by the word of God become *signs*. We are astonished at *τίπαρα*, and marvel only; but when the wonder becomes a sign, we *believe*.”—*Stier*.

² “C'est un défaut des hommes de n'être touchés et remués que par la vue même des prodiges, et de retomber aussitôt après dans leur première insensibilité, quand ils ne les voient plus. La

Let us bear in mind the lesson which is left for each of us. Christ can now put away all spiritual disease, can cleanse us from all our sins, though there be no visible *signs and wonders* of His presence amongst us. He can cure now without coming down as well as He did in the days of His earthly mission.

(49) *The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.*

Bonaventura.

Luca Brug.

Arias Mont.

The father addressed Christ as Lord, or as our translation gives it, *Sir*—a recognition and an acknowledgment that in Him was something above an ordinary man, though he evidently did not comprehend the truth that Christ was Very God; and then, in his distress lest his *child* should die whilst our Blessed Lord was talking with and rebuking him for the feebleness of his faith, he adds, impatiently, the prayer that Christ would cease from this discourse and come down before it was too late. In this act of impatience, in this entreaty that there might be no delay, the father testifies to the desperate nature of his child's sickness, and thus proves the reality and the greatness of the miracle. It was no slight attack of fever such as medicine could remove: his son was not only ill—he was at the very point of death.

Gregory.

Alb. Magnus.
John xi. 21.

The terror of the *nobleman*, then, shows us the amount of his belief in Christ. He asked two things—

(1) *Come down*; for unless our Blessed Lord were present in the body, he did not imagine that He could heal diseases. He did not recognise in Him any power to work a cure at a distance.

(2) *Come down ere my child die*; not believing that He had any power after death. His faith in Christ was that which Martha had when she exclaimed, *Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died*. The father did not see in our Blessed Lord the Lord of Life; and since Christ had not as yet raised any dead to life, it is not to be wondered at that the nobleman should have limited His power to the

vue d'un miracle fait sur eux une impression sensible; et si cette impression continuait, on pourrait dire qu'ils auraient une véritable foi. Mais dès que ce qui les avait touchés s'éloigne de leurs sens, quoique leur persuasion subsiste, elle devient sans action et sans mouvement. C'est l'état de la plupart des

Chrétien : ils sont quelquefois touchés par certains accidens extraordinaires; ils forment des desseins de se convertir; mais cela s'efface bientôt. Lorsqu'ils cessent d'en être frappés, ils retombent aussitôt dans l'assoupissement dont ces accidens les avaient tirés."—*Nicole sur les Évangiles.*

bodies of the sick.¹ Like the Apostles in the ship when the storm arose and the waters threatened to overwhelm them, and they doubted of their safety because He was asleep, so this man required the visible presence of Christ for the healing of his child.

Beaux Amis.

Matt. viii. 25.

Salmeron.

Our Saviour answered the prayer of faith, and healed the son, though He did not in His human nature go down with the father; but being in all places present in His Divine nature, He healed the son at the same time that He strengthened the faith of the father.² He whose ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts like our thoughts, will answer all prayer, though He may not do it in the way which, in our ignorance, we may think the best.

Toletus.

(50) *Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.*

Liveth. Our Blessed Lord does not say will live, or recover, but he already has recovered—he *liveth*. The healing had already taken place by virtue of that word which our Lord had spoken, and Christ announces to the father an act which was already consummated. *And the man believed the word* of Christ that his son was already healed. He is not said to believe in Jesus, but only in the truth of this word which He had uttered.³ He is not even said to have believed in Christ's power to heal, but rather, as it would seem, he looked upon Him as a prophet, and that He was merely announcing a fact which had occurred. This is not the belief referred to afterwards in the fifty-third verse. It is barely a belief in Christ's words, and indicates only a very small amount of faith; for since men readily believe that which they greatly desire, he would very easily be persuaded of that which he longed for.⁴

Maldonatus.

Cajetan.

Jansen Yp.

Tirinus.

Grotius.

Hugo de S. Charo.

¹ "Thinking and acting most foolishly, he asks a power which only God can show, and yet does not believe that He accomplishes all things as God, nor yet that He will be superior to death and able to overcome it. Hence he beseeches Him to hasten down, lest death should overcome the child."—*S. Cyril* in loco.

² "Sanat, ne modicam quam habebat fidem amittat; non autem descendit, ut fides ejus perficiatur, credatque etiam absentem sanare potuisse; et hac via et morbo filii et patris infidelitati medetur."—*Toletus*.

³ "Nota quod prius dicit,—credidit, et postea ibat; quia prius est corde credere, et postea ire opere."—*Antonius de Padua*.

⁴ Yet another says: "O mirum incrementum, quod ab illa Domini objurigatione manasse credendum est. Credidit quod absens Dominus verbo reddere salutem posset et ita credidit, ut hac fiducia fretus, ita arripuerit, non amplius ipsius præsentiam exigens ut aperte liqueat, uno eodemque tempore Dominum et filio salutem et patri fidem dedisse."—*Ph. Dis.*

The circumstances of this miracle not only bear witness to the Divine mission of the Saviour; they attest His Divine nature: what He did was done manifestly with power. We do not find Him throwing Himself on His knees and beseeching the Father to heal this child, as His Apostles did when they worked miracles. He does not go into the house at the request of the father of the child, and stretch Himself by the body of the sick, and entreat for him, as Elijah did. Here is no sending a servant with a staff, and then coming and lying by the side of the dead child, as Elisha did. But by His own inherent power He raised the sick child, and by His word, *Go thy way; thy son liveth*, He drove away his sickness and announced to the father that his son was already healed.

But here is not one miracle recorded, but two. The nobleman, afflicted at the prospect of his son's death, came to Christ entreating Him to heal him of his sickness, and Christ, as He ever does, gave, in answer to the prayer of faith, far more than the father asked. Christ showed Himself the Physician and the Maker both of body and of soul. He gave corporeal health to the son, and spiritual healing to the father. He removed, by His word, the fever from the child, and by the same word unbelief from the father, enabling the one to rise from his bed and the other to cast off all doubt from his mind, by convincing him that He was the Almighty God, who was ever present and could perform works of mercy in all places. And the spiritual strength and faith which was given to the father was, as in the case of the child, done by a word.¹ When He commanded, *Go thy way*, He gave the man power to believe. His word then was like His word of old, *Let there be light, and there was light*. It was as when He spake at another time, *Son, thy sins be forgiven thee*—not only a declaration, but a word giving power to him who received it. Hence we find the father rising up and going, believing the word, though he had not what he asked for, the presence of our Blessed Lord. But, indeed, he needed not this, having been strengthened to believe in the assurance of Christ, though he had not the witness of sight.

¹ "Miraculum duplex operatus est Jesus: unum in corde patris, in quo sanavit incredulitatem; alterum in filii corpore, a quo dispulit febrem. Sana, Domine, incredulitatem nostram; adauge et corrobora in nobis fidem: verbo Tuo febrem abige; cupiditatum nostrarum æstum extingue: fac ut, sermonibus

Tuis credens, in via mandatorum Tuorum simplici obedientia ambulem ad domum cœlestem et æternam. Dic Ecclesiæ pro me, similibusque mihi peccatoribus, coram divina tua maiestate gementi, *Filius tuus vivit.*"—*Alex. Natalis.*

In thus giving belief and spiritual healing to the father through the temporal and corporeal healing of the son, our Blessed Lord teaches the pastors of His flock that by ministering to the temporal wants of those committed to their care they may find an entrance to their hearts, and by their charity and mercy in the worldly troubles of their parishioners may minister to the spiritual and eternal good of Christ's little ones. Nicole.

(51) *And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.* (52) *Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour¹ the fever left him.*

The father had only looked, as it would seem, for a gradual cure. When, he asks, did he begin to show signs of amendment? They tell him, in answer to his inquiries, that the child had not gradually amended, but that he had at once been made perfectly well. And in this we see the completeness of the miracle which Christ wrought. A fever is that which is usually very gradual in its retirement from the body of the sick person. Here there was no slow process of cure; it wholly left him, and that instantly; and thus, in a very marked manner, proclaimed the power of Christ and the miraculous nature of the healing. And this is marked by the word which Christ uses. He does not say that he shall live, but that *he liveth*—is now healed of his sickness. Again, when the father heard of the cure, and that his son was living and had recovered of his sickness, he inquired of the servants the *hour* when this had taken place, so that he might be sure whether it were accidental or whether it had happened by Christ's power, and in accordance with His words; and he finds that the cure had taken place at the very time when God had declared that his son was recovered.² Trench.
Dion. Carth.
Theophylact.
Bengel.
Eusebius
Emiss.
Chrysostom.

The momentary hesitations and doubts which those felt

¹ "*Hora septima est à solis ortu, nam diem ut diximus Hebræi in duodecim æquales horas, et noctem in totidem, dividebant: hora ergo septima erat prima hora post meridiem.*"—*Toletus*. "The servants say *yesterday* according to the Jewish division of the day, according to which the day ends at sunset; and the healing had taken place about one o'clock in the after-

noon. The distance between Cana and Capernaum being about twenty-five miles, his father could have gone from Cana to his own house in the same day."—*Hengstenberg*.

² "It is not by chance that the fever leaves the child at the *seventh hour*; for seven is the number of rest."—*Origen*.

who lived at the time of Christ's dwelling upon earth, are means by which our doubts are removed, and the power of Christ proclaimed beyond the reach of cavil or the possibility of any honest denial.

Quesnel.

And this miracle was not only an act of mercy to the *nobleman* whose son was raised from a sick bed when at the point of death, and fruitful in lessons to us; it was an especial message of comfort to His disciples, who witnessed the coming of the father, and knew of the healing of the child. In it our Blessed Lord certified to them the reality of His power to heal and the fact of His presence as a protector to His Church, though He was no longer visibly amongst them. For as He needed not to *come down* in order that the sick should be made whole, so was He not the less powerful, not the less present with them, though they saw Him not in bodily presence after His ascension.

(53) *So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.*

Grotius.

He *believed*,—that is, not merely, as at verse 50, that Christ's word was true; but he now had faith in Christ as the great Healer, the Messiah, who should come into the world. In this we may see that faith, like other Christian graces, is formed gradually, and has its beginning, its growth, and its maturity. The father had the dawning of faith in his heart, some belief in Christ's power, when he came to the Saviour and entreated Him to come and heal his son: when the Lord spake, and said, *Thy son liveth*, his faith was increased, and he believed *the word* of Christ; but when, on his return, his servants met him, and announced the perfect recovery of his son, and he learnt that this had taken place at the time when our Blessed Lord declared it to him, then, in the full maturity of faith, he recognised the hand of God, who had spoken, and immediately what he had commanded was done, and he acknowledged Christ to be not only the Messiah, but that this Messiah was the Lord, the Almighty God.¹ At one and the same time, by the same act, did Christ heal the body of the son of the fever, and the soul of the father of its infirmity of faith.

Bede.

Konigsteyn.

Gregory.

And no sooner was he led to this full belief in Christ than he proclaimed the fact of God's goodness to his child, so that others might have the same faith, and glorify God for

¹ "Jam non regulus (βασιλικός), sed quando venit, sed rex et plenus fide rex iste, dicendus est. Regulus erat recedit."—*Euseb. Emissemus*.

His miracle of healing. He buried not his gratitude and his faith within his own heart, but declared to others what God had done, and thus led them to the Saviour, and caused them to believe with him. In this we are taught our duties. When we are led to the feet of Christ, and when we feel within us what God has done for our soul, then it is our duty, as this *nobleman* did, to bring others to Christ.¹ Quesnel.

He believed, and his whole house. . In this we have a striking example of the blessings which even temporal sufferings bring with them. Neither *the nobleman* nor his household believed in Christ at the first; but when sorrow came, and his son lay at the point of death, then *himself* and *his whole house* recognised the power of the Saviour, and *believed* with full faith in Him.² Thus do temporal evils Toletus. heap upon our heads eternal good.

Let us note that it was natural instinct and duty which led this man to Christ, and that Christ rewarded him for this. Natural duties are given to prepare men for spiritual privileges; and when they faithfully perform the common duties of life, the law of their being becomes their school-master, and brings them to Christ so effectually that He accepts and blesses them as He blessed this man. Gal. III. 24.

(54) *This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He was come out of Judæa into Galilee.*

This is again the second miracle. That is, this is the *second miracle* which Christ did, not in Cana of Galilee, but the *second* which He did in all Galilee, and this *second* He wrought on His return thither *again*. This second miracle He did when He had returned hither from Jerusalem. The first was that which He had wrought at the marriage feast, when He changed the water into wine. These two miracles preceded all the miracles which the other Evangelists record as done in Galilee.³ Toletus.
Corn. à Lap.
Maldonatus.
John II. 11.
Cajetan.

¹ “Heureux les peuples dont les pasteurs obtiennent miséricorde pour eux-mêmes ! Car cette miséricorde ne demeure pas dans les pasteurs ; elle se répand sur tout le troupeau.”—*Nicolas sur les Évangiles.*

² If, as has been suggested, the nobleman was Chuza, the steward of Herod, then in this miracle there is a motive for the faith and gratitude of Joanna, who ministered unto the Lord of her substance : see St. Luke viii. 3.

³ “Non hoc *secundum* Christi *miraculum* Evangelista esse affirmat, sed hoc esse secundum quod fecit cum à Judæa reverteretur in Galilæam ; duos regressus significans, et in utroque duo miracula facta. Regrediens à baptismo fecit miraculum conversionis aquæ in vinum : regrediens modo à festo Paschatis, quando multum in Judæam immoratus fuerat, hoc miraculum fecit secundum. Sunt enim duæ illæ advertendæ particulae, *iterum* et *secundum*. *Iterum* ad

And these two miracles are typical of our Blessed Lord's two comings into the world, and also of His entrance into the hearts of those who hear His call, and open the door, and invite Him to make His abode with them. First, He came to give joy by supplying wine to those who needed; then, He came to remove sickness.

Isa. xii. 3.

Ludolph.

(1) So is it in His two advents into the world. At His incarnation He came to give peace, to bring to men the tidings and the assurance of that redemption which was to be the cause of great joy, and to invite all men to the marriage feast. At His second advent He will remove all that offends, all that defiles and corrupts His Church.

Matt. xiii. 20.

Ps. cv. 43.

Ps. cvii. 20.
Beaux Amis.

(2) These two miracles, again, are typical of Christ's dealings with the individual believer. The first effect of freedom from the thralldom of the world, and of turning to God, is the feeling of joy at deliverance from the burden of sin, for He brings forth *His people with joy* from the house of bondage, and *His chosen with gladness*. It is the change, by the power of Christ's word, from the water of sin to the wine of the Gospel. When this is not only received into the heart, but bears fruit in a real conversion from the ways of iniquity, a cleaving steadfastly to God, and the sanctification of the penitent, Christ not only gives joy, but He heals the diseases of the soul. As of old, when He had delivered His people from Egypt, *He sent His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions*.

regressum refertur, *secundum* autem ad signum, ut sit sensus, Hoc secundum signum fecit Jesus in Galilæo cum secundò reverteretur à Judæa. Ex quo loco sanè colligitur hunc secundum esse regressum; nisi enim esset secundus,

non erat cur Evangelista diceret *iterum*: volens autem parem numerum et miraculorum et regressum facere, propterea dixit, *Hoc iterum secundum*." — *Toletus*.

••• "Domine Jesu Christe, qui de Judæa angelicæ confessionis et laudis in Galilæam, rotam hujus mundi, venisti, quoniam infirmus sum, temporalium rerum pulchritudine tentatus, et ideo incipio jam mori, tentatione fatigatus, miserere mei priusquam moriar

morte culpæ, corporis, vel gehennæ; ut virtute verbi, humilitate confessionis, jejunio, oratione, pietate, et exemplo, per gratiam Salvatoris liberer à febre fomitis et ægritudine peccati. Amen." — *Alb. Magnus*.

THE TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. MATTHEW XVIII. 21—35.¹

(21) *Then came Peter unto Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?* Luke xvii. 4.

Then. This particle (τότε) connects the question of St. Peter with the words which had gone before. Christ had spoken to His disciples of the manner in which a *brother* was to be reproved, and also of the forgiveness which should accompany every act of repentance. Peter, as though desirous of knowing the limits of this forgiveness, here asks our Blessed Lord whether it should reach to *seven times*. Christ had also warned His Apostles, and all Christians, against offending and despising any of the *little ones* of His flock. Lest, then, by the exercise of an unforgiving spirit he should do this, St. Peter asks how often he is to be upon his guard in this respect—how often he is required to forgive his *brother*. In suggesting that he should forgive *seven* offences, the Apostle goes beyond that which Jewish tradition held to be right.² The Rabbins limited forgiveness to three Matt. xviii. 15
—17.
Tovatus.
Trench.
Matt. xviii.
10.
Jerome.

¹ “Dominica præcedente audivimus quam benigne Dominus petentibus sanitatem tam mentis quam corporis tribuit in regulo et ejus filio. Hodie ostendit quod Sui servi, exemplo Sui, benigni invicem esse debent, alioquin in pristinam relapsuri jacturam misericorditer relaxatam.”—*Konigsteyn*.

² “Quæretur, quare potius quæsivit hoc Petrus, quam alius de Apostolis. Primo, quia forte non occurrit alteri istud dubium de numero remissionum: ideo ipse solus quæsivit. Ita occurrebant alia aliis discipulis, quæ ipsi quærebant à Christo, quando Petrus nihil

quærebat, sicut quando Philippus petivit ostendi Patrem; et ita de aliis. Secundo, quia Petrus, cum esset cæteris ferventior, et ubique præcipuus et os totius collegii, audacior erat in inquirendo, ut dicit Chrysostomus. Sciendum autem quod discipuli omnes inveniuntur quærere sæpe aliquid à Christo, aut respondere aliquid Ei; unus autem particulariter raro quærit aut respondet: et quando unus loquitur, pluries Petrus loquitur, quam alii. Primum apparet, si quis quærat seriem Evangelorum, quia dicuntur quæsivisse discipuli, et respondisse discipuli, et causa hujus est quia

Lightfoot.

Amos i. 6;
ii. 4, 6.

times, grounding this upon the words of Amos—*Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof.*¹ Others, however, adding these two numbers together, taught that forgiveness was to be exercised *seven times*; and to this, as the utmost that could be required of any one, St. Peter seems to refer. The former interpretation, and the limitation to three times, is an instance how the Rabbins, by their glosses upon the law, had narrowed the declaration of the Almighty. In this instance the heathen had better preserved the merciful spirit of God's law.²

Lev. iv. 6, 17.

Num. xix. 4.

Lev. xxvi. 18.

Salmeron.

Tostatus.

The supposition that *seven times* was the limit beyond which forgiveness was not to be expected, seemed to derive some support from the fact that the Mosaic law prescribed that the blood of the sin offering was only to be sprinkled *seven times before the Lord*, and that the blood of the heifer was to be sprinkled for the same number of times. In the Book of Leviticus, again, we read that if the people fell into sin they were to be punished for their sin *seven times*. And since all correction, all punishment for sin in this life implies a call to repentance, and is given as a call and means of amendment, the mercy of God seemed to be limited to this number of acts of forgiveness; and to this the words of St. Peter, speaking in the spirit of the Jewish teachers of the law, seem to apply.

How oft shall my brother sin against me? Thus the Apostle recognises the fact that all men are children of one parent, that all men are brethren, and bound together by the obligations of brotherly relationship.

The answer of our Blessed Lord, like so many other words addressed to St. Peter, is not said to him only, but

sive unus quæreret, aut responderet, sive omnes aut multi hoc facerent, dum tamen causa esset communis—id est, non esset aliquid quod specialiter pertineret ad unum eorum, vel de quo dubitaret unus solus—dicitur quod quæsierunt discipuli, vel responderunt discipuli; et quia id de quo quærebatur, aut respondebatur, ut communiter pertinebat ad omnes, dicitur quod discipuli dixerunt Christo, quod omnes loquerentur, sed unus loquebatur pro omnibus; vel id quod unus quærebat pertinebat ad omnes, etiamsi cæteri non jussissent illud quæri: et quia raro pertinebat causa ad unum solum, raro loquitur unus,—id est, dicitur unus loqui particulariter; quod est secundum. Tertium

patet, quia quando unus loquitur pluries loquitur Petrus, quam quilibet aliorum, quia ferventior et audacior cæteris, ut dicit Chrysostomus."—*Tostatus*.

¹ "A man that commits a sin, the *first* time they pardon him; the *second* time they pardon him; the *third* time they pardon him; the *fourth* time they do not pardon, according to Amos ii. 6 and Job xxxiii. 29" (Talm. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86, 2; Maimon. Halch. Teshaba, c. 3, § 5). And again: "He that says I have sinned, and I repent, they forgive him *unto three times*, and no more" (Abot. R. Nathan, ch. 40, fol. 9, 3).

² See S. Augustine in Serm. lxxxiii. § 4, ed. Benedict.

is addressed to all, not merely to His Apostles, but to all His people. It was not the duty of Peter only, but that of all Christians equally with him, to forgive their brother so often as he may trespass against them and desire forgiveness.

Dion. Carth.
Tostatus.

(22) *Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.*¹

Gen. iv. 24.
Matt. vi. 14.
Mark xi. 25.
Col. iii. 13.

That is, how often soever your brother offends against you and seeks forgiveness, so often are you to forgive him his trespass. St. Peter had asked whether he must forgive *seven times*, as though this were the utmost extent that, in imagination, he thought it possible that he could, by the law of Christ, be required to forgive his brother.² Our Blessed Lord, making use of this number seven, tells him that he is to forgive *until seventy times seven*; not meaning that after that he may refuse to take pity upon his brother, but, in accordance with the Jewish custom, He makes use of a large finite number to represent an infinite one. Thus we read in Genesis, *If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.*

Theophylact.

Cajetan.
Hilary.
Gen. iv. 24.

In this precept we may also discern the greatness and the abyss of Christ's love to man. For He who commands us to forgive our brother how often soever he may have injured or offended us, in that command assures us of His own readiness to forgive all our sins, however numerous and great they may be. But we have not only the precept of Christ, we have His example, who, in the midst of suffering, forgave His murderers; and, lest we should think that this is too high and holy a model for us to be able in any way to copy, He gives us the examples of His saints and servants, *men of like passions* with ourselves, who have received from Him grace to fulfil this command. Joseph, who was in many ways a type of our Blessed Lord, is so also in this particular,

Corn. & Lap.

Acts xiv. 15.

¹ "The *ἑπτάκις*, as also the following *ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτά*, contains merely the ideas of the limited and of the unlimited, expressed according to the Jewish practice by the number seven. Compare Genesis xxxiii. 3, and 1 Kings xviii. 43."—*Olshausen*. "This number [seven] is in common use, to show that a thing has been often done. 'Have I not told you seven times to fetch water and wash my feet?' 'Seven times have I been to the temple; but still my requests

are not granted.' 'Seven times have I requested the father to give me the hand of his daughter, but he refused me; and therefore I will not ask him again.' 'Have I not forgiven you seven times? and how shall I forgive you again?'"—*Roberts's Oriental Illustrations*, p. 533.

² "Sciebat illud quod dictum est 4 Reg. v. [2 Kings v. 10] quod Eliseus præcipit Naaman, quod septies lavaret se in Jordane: ideo cogitavit quod septies dimittere deberet."—*Th. Aquinas*.

Gen. i. 15—
21.1 Sam. xxiv.
4—7; xxvi.
7—12.

Acts vii. 60.

Ward.

that he forgave his brethren the great wrong they had intended, and had done, against him. David, again, is an example in this, that when he had his enemy in his hands he forgave Saul. And if we have these instances before the coming of Christ, and before the example of His infinite mercy was given to mankind, we have since the incarnation of the Eternal Son the command, the example, and the strength to be merciful after the pattern of His mercy.¹ After the death of Christ, we have the example of Stephen also, who forgave, and in the moment of his death prayed for the forgiveness of, his murderers. By all these ways—by precepts, by parables, by His own example, and by that of His saints and disciples—does Christ call upon us to forgive our brother his offences *until seventy times seven*; that is, continually, without any limitation.²

(23) *Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.*

Trench.

1 Pet. i. 22.

Gregory.

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Cajetan.

Therefore—in order, that is, that you may understand this precept the better, I give you the parable which teaches the duty of forgiveness, and set before you the consequences of an unforgiving temper. *Therefore*—because love towards the brethren, and boundless charity, is the law and central principle of My *kingdom*, those things which happen in the world, and will be executed at the last, outwardly teach and enforce the same commandment—*see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*

The kingdom of heaven here mentioned is the militant Church of God, the mystical body of Christ; and what occurs therein is God's dealing with His people, which has its beginning here and its consummation in the life to come. It is so called, because in it are all means and graces by

¹ "Certè hominis misericordia est ut nubes matutina, quæ cito finitur: bonitas hominis taxata est, sicut et spiritus ejus. At cùm factus est Deus homo, et quando homo redditur quidam Deus,—i. e. quando Spiritus Sanctus habitat in homine,—sicut misericordia Dei est ab æterno in æternum, ita misericordia hominis redditur ab extremo ad extremum; attingit nam à fine ad finem fortiter." — *Paulus de Palacio.*

² "Ἑβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτά. The

number *seven* in Holy Scripture is used to signify completeness; and the multiplication of 70 by 7 here signifies that there is no stint or limit to the spirit of forgiveness. The number ten times seven is used to express the fullness of retribution on Lamech (Gen. iv. 24); here the number is *seventy times seven*, the number of years from the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem unto Christ, who brought in the forgiveness of sins (Dan. ix. 24)."—*Wordsworth.*

which the children of earth are made children of the militant Church of God, and are led on to the kingdom of glory in heaven. The ruler of this kingdom is not merely *a certain king*; He is a man, a king (ἄνθρωπος βασιλεῖς): *a king*, for He is God, the King of kings; *a man*, for He has taken to Himself our humanity: *a king*, in the power and the majesty of His rule; *man*, in His sympathy for His fellow-men. It is our Blessed Lord, the Incarnate God, who is here represented—the man Christ Jesus, who is the Judge of quick and dead, who now reckons with every man, and who will hereafter take solemn account of all His servants.¹ This is the special office of the Messiah, for *the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son*. And in this parable we have the two attributes which seem to make up the character—if we may so say—of Almighty God. He is represented, in the person of the king in the parable,² as judging His servants, and as showing at the same time the greatness of His mercy to the sinner. God is revealed to us as the just and merciful One. *All the paths of the Lord, says David, are mercy and truth. My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.* He shows here the greatness of His mercy in contrast with the unmercifulness of man, and the righteousness of His judgment. Nor must we omit to notice the terms in which this judgment is spoken of—*He would take account*. He willed (ἠθέλησε); that is, in so doing He acted of His own free will and by the exercise of His own supreme authority, as and when it seemed best to Him. And those who were summoned to render this *account* were *His servants*. Under this name all men are included; all men are *His servants*, as all sinners are His debtors. And He is said to *take account*, inasmuch as He rewards or punishes men strictly according to the measure of their unrepented sins. For at the last great day the examination will be a strict *account* not only of the evil which we have done; but also of the good we have neglected to do, as well as of those things which by

Emm. ab
Incaruat.Theophylact.
Sylveira.John v. 22,
27.

Avendaño.

John v. 22.

Ps. xxv. 10.

Ps. cl. 1.

Ps. cxvi. 5.

Coppenstein.

Bengel.

Ferus.

Chrysostom.

¹ "Hic homo Rex, qui rationem à servis suis exigit, non dubium, quin ille est, qui—ut D. Joannes ait—habet in veste et scemore suo scriptum, *Rex regum et Dominus dominantium* (Apoc. xix. 16), qui constitutus est à Deo iudex vivorum et mortuorum, ut ait B. Petrus (Act. x. 42)."—*Ph. Diez*.

² "Familiare fuit Syris, si D. Hieronymo credimus, et Palæstinis maxime, ad omnem sermonem suum

parabolas jungere, ut quod per simplex præceptum teneri ab auditoribus non potest, per similitudinem exempla que teneatur. Et hactenus solenne est concionatoribus, et omnibus aliis qui vulgo aliquid proponere solent, ut exemplis et similitudinibus populum, quo volunt, quasi manducant. Nam per exempla docere non solum facile, sed et jucundum et delectabile est."—*Hofmeister*.

His grace we have done—all deeds, all words, all wishes, and habits, whether of righteousness or of sin—will then pass in review before Him and before the sight of all men.

Alvernus.

Salmeron.

Ludolph.

Ferus.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Royard.

Chemnitz.

Let us remember, however, that the *account* which is spoken of in the parable will be but completed in the day of judgment: it is ever going on in this life; for all actions, all thoughts, all desires, are open to the eye of God at every moment, and He is thus all our life through taking *account of His servants*.¹ We are already standing at His judgment bar: we already are being summoned to render account for the things which we are doing in this life. He calls us in every feeling of fear at the prospect of death; He summons us in every trouble of conscience, and every time we feel the bitterness of sin and the unsatisfying nature of worldly pleasures; He speaks to us when He enlightens our conscience to perceive the evil of sin and the happiness of obedience to God; He speaks to us in every word of the Scriptures of Truth, which were all written for our learning. Every warning uttered by the mouths of His ministers, every denunciation of God's anger against sin, is His call, every secret inspiration by which we are recalled from the paths of sin is from Him, and in it He is taking *account*, and reminding us that we are His servants, and accountable to Him for all our actions.

The points of contrast in this parable are these—

(1) On the one hand, the king, the master of the household, the Almighty God; on the other, *His servants*, mankind in general.²

(2) The greatness of the debt owing by the first servant to his master, and the comparative smallness of the amount due from the one servant to his fellow-servant.

Sylveira,
Leigh.

(3) The mercifulness of the king to his debtor, and the cruelty of the same debtor to his fellow-servant.

Ludov.
Graust.

As we are subjects of that kingdom, as we are servants of that King, let us each one remember that nothing draws us more to God, nothing fits us more to inherit the blessings of that kingdom, than charity to our brethren. Nothing cuts us off from Christ, nothing unfits us more, or casts us out of that kingdom sooner, than an unmerciful heart and exacting, unfeeling treatment of our brethren.

¹ “*Cum servis suis, nempe cum omnibus hominibus, modo in privato iudicio, postea in finali, singulorum actus, mores et vitam discutiendo.*”—*Emm. ab Incarnatione*. “In presenti ponit rationem Dominus cum servis suis per Scripturas, per creaturas, per doctores, per confessores, per illuminationem pro-

prie conscientiae.”—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

² “*Assimilatum est regnum cælorum—id est, vita justorum vel Ecclesia militans. Adaptat negotium negotio, non omnes circumstantias omnibus circumstantiis. Dominus enim revocat dimissa sicut et hic, et ideo expedit dimittere.*”—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

(24) *And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.*

God's judgments are not merely national; they concern not only large bodies of men, but they are individual also: hence we have *one* who was brought to the king.¹ It is this individuality of God's judgment which is constantly pointed out in His word. Though He is present to all, yet He sees and takes *account* of each. The evidence, moreover, of the sinner's own conscience makes him aware of that presence, and makes God present to him. So in the case of this debtor, he came not of his own accord, but was *brought* against his will, as knowing, by his own conscience, before any word had been spoken by his master, that he should be condemned as soon as his lord *had begun to reckon*. Royard. Bengel. Tostatus.

The greatness of the sum which he owed, *ten thousand talents*, or more than a million pounds sterling,² would indicate that he was an upper servant—the steward, as it would seem—of the king; and this supposition appears to be confirmed by the fact that he was the first brought to his lord: he came as soon as the king *had begun to reckon*. Alford. Tostatus.

By the greatness of this sum our Blessed Lord would point out the greatness of those gifts of nature and of grace which we have each of us received from the hand of God, and received, not as owners, but as stewards, bound to render an *account* to Him of the use which we have made of them; and hence we are taught the heinousness of our sin against God, in wasting or in misapplying them. Our sin is great, because it is against One who is Infinite, One whose mercies to us have been without number;³ because our sin has been done in despite of His blood who has redeemed us from the power of sin; and because it has been persisted in notwithstanding that *cloud of witnesses* to Christ's power and to Christ's love which surrounds us.⁴ He who owed *ten thousand talents* is Ludolph. Paulus de Palacio. Heb. xii. 1. Salmeron.

¹ "Unus qui debet. Tu es ille. Nullum est debitum peccato majus."—Avancinus.

² There are many estimates as to what the ten thousand talents would amount to. The amount is dependent upon whether they are silver or gold talents. What, however, is meant is that the sum was exceedingly large and beyond the power of the servant to pay.

³ "Magis sumus debitores Dei et plus offendimus Eum quam homo pos-

set offendere proximum; tanta enim est offensa, quantus est ille qui offenditur: Deus autem est infinitus, et ideo offensa in Illum commissa quandam habet infinitatem."—Ludolph.

⁴ "Non solum peccatum dicitur debitum sed etiam debitum maximum; et ideo Dominus de hoc debitore ait, Qui debebat ei decem millia talentorum. . . . Peccatum verò lethale dicitur tam magnum debitum eò quòd nullus per se solum illud solvere potest: imò

the image of one who has wrought great evil during his life on earth, the parable of one to whom much has been entrusted, and who has yet brought in but little to his master: he stands before us a fearful picture of the extent of the sinner's trespasses, as the representative of the man who, by his example, by his labours, by the contamination of his sins, has destroyed as many souls, it may be, as the man in this parable owed talents to his lord.

Origen.

Let us, then, remember, for we have not now to learn it for the first time, that we owe all things we have to God, and that He will *take account* of all those things which He has entrusted to us, whether they are what we call the gifts of nature or those of grace. He has given to our keeping all gifts of nature—

Gen. i. 27.
1 Thess. iv. 4.

(1) He gave us our body, with all its endowments, for He it was who *created man*; and He gave us this in order that we might preserve it *in holiness and sanctification*.

Gen. i. 26;
ii. 7.

(2) He breathed into our bodies a living spirit, and thus made us in *His likeness*, that so we might honour Him in all the faculties of that soul.

Ps. xci. 16.
Ephes. v. 16.

(3) He gave us time, and declared, *With long life will I satisfy thee*; and this He wills we should spend to His glory, and thus redeem *the time, because the days are evil*.

Gen. i. 28.

(4) He has given us all temporal goods and possessions, having made man *to have dominion over all creatures on the earth*, not that we should waste our goods, but should freely minister to the wants of others, as good stewards of those riches which He has placed in our hands.

He, then, who has given us all things which we possess upon earth, in this parable teaches us that He will *take account* at the last day of the use we make of all these things. He will reckon with us for all the sins done against that body which He made; for all sins committed against that soul which is His likeness, and which He has breathed as a portion of Himself into our bodies: He will bid us render to Him an account of the time which He has allotted us on earth, and also of the goods and influence which He has entrusted to us to use for the good of others and for the benefit of our own souls.¹

Voragine.

dicatur debitum infinitum, quia est infinitæ malitiæ objectivè et quia est destructivum gratiæ, quæ includit in se pretium vitæ Christi, de quo B. Paulus ait, Empti enim estis pretio magno (1 Cor. vi. 20)."—*Ph. Diez*.

¹ As most of the parables of our Blessed Lord, beyond the ethical or doctrinal teaching which they convey

to us, have a certain historical applicability to the people to whom they were first addressed, so some commentators imagine such a reference in this parable of the unmerciful servant. Thus one says: "Servus hic qui decem millia talentorum debuit Judaicus est populus, qui decalogo legis constrictus multarum transgressionum debitis fuerat

But we have not only to render Him an *account* of the gifts and endowments which we call natural, we have also to give *account* of those which we distinguish by the name of *graces*—the supernatural gifts by which we have the power to abide His faithful children and to bring forth the fruits of holiness. He has given us—

(1) His great, His inestimable gifts: His only-begotten Son, who was made for us and *unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* Paulus de Palacio.
1 Cor. i. 30.

(2) His holy word, the revelation of His will in the Scriptures of Divine truth.

(3) The sacraments, by which we are grafted into His body, and by which we may be cleansed and healed, and through which we derive strength for our Christian course.

(4) He has given us conscience, His voice within us, by which we are warned against sin, and are reproved when we fall into temptation.

(5) He has given us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity, by which we are guided in our walk, animated in the moment of trial, and purified to be temples meet for His indwelling.¹ 1 Cor. xii. 7.
Stapleton.

(25) *But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.* 2 Kings iv. 1.
Neh. v. 8.

The details of this parable have reference to the custom of the Jews of old and of Orientals in the present day. The richer members of the Jewish nation had servants to whom they gave money for the purpose of trading, and from whom they received a return in the shape of interest, or a proportion of the profits of trade. We find even that the sale of the wife and children of debtors was allowed amongst the Jews, as it was notoriously the practice amongst the surrounding nations; and when in this parable the lord directed that *all that he had* should be sold, he was but disposing of that property all of which, of right, belonged to himself. Schoettgen.
2 Kings iv. 1.
Bengel.

obnoxius. Quem Dominus suus jussit *venundari, et uxorem, et filios, et omnia quæ habebat, et reddi*: quia non solum populum, sed etiam synagogam Judæorum, prælatos simul et subditos, cum tota substantia eorum, propter delictorum magnitudinem, in exterarum potestatem tradidit nationum, ut quod noluerunt voto persolvere cogerentur tormento."—*Rabanus Maurus.*

¹ "Dedit gratias gratis datas. Dat infinitas inspirationes et spiritualia beneficia, quibus à malo avocetur, ad bonum promoveatur. O verè talenta et decem talenta et decem millia talenta profecto talenta sunt quibus cælum, Deumque ipsum, mercari licet. Profecto talenta sunt quæ qui non solvit nulla pœna nisi inferno satisfaciet."—*Paulus de Palacio.*

Gorranus.
Ludov.
Granat.

The greatness of the sum owing, and the orders of the lord for the sale of the servant, represent vividly the utter powerlessness of the sinner to make satisfaction for those sins, those debts which he owes to God. Human nature, indeed, without Christ has no means of paying aught, neither strength to do, nor grace sufficient to direct him aright. For however able we are, of our own strength, to sin against our Maker, yet with our corrupted nature we are unable to serve God, and require His grace to enable us to fulfil His commands.¹

Haymo.

Tostatus.

Luke xv. 13.

Rom. vi. 16.
Theophylact.

Another parable teaches us that the sinner who dissipates the powers of soul and body in riotous living wastes the goods which his heavenly Father has entrusted to him. In the present parable we are taught this additional truth, that he who has totally departed from God, who has become the servant of another master, and refuses to repent, will be sold to that master, will become his liege servant, and be excluded from the household of God.

He that is a debtor to God, and renders Him nothing of that which is due to Him, is utterly alienated from God, and serves another master, to whom he has sold himself and all that he has. Our sins put us far off from God, and the sentence which He passes upon us we have first passed upon ourselves by our departure from Him.² Sin binds us first in the fetters of slavery, and the sale of the debtor is but the ratification of his own act.

Bredembach.

(26) *The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.*

In his fear lest the directions of his master should be carried out, he forgets the greatness of his sins; he sees not the largeness of the debt which is owing to his lord. His alarm makes him over-estimate his power, so that he promises to satisfy all the demands of the king. His master, however, in the fulness of his mercy, looks not at the greatness of the debt and the ignorance of his servant, but regards only his misery and the desire of his heart.

Salmeron.

In this verse our Blessed Lord points out what is neces-

¹ "Homo per se potest ruere, sed non resurgere; per se offendere et peccare, ac per hoc debitum contrahere, sed non per se satisfacere, nisi gratia Dei accedente: et si homo pro uno tantum peccato non sufficit satisfacere,

multo minus pro decem millibus peccatorum talentis?"—Augustine, Serm. xv. de Verb. Domini.

² "Amittis enim per peccatum libertatem et servus es peccati. O dura servitus."—Avancinus.

nary to every penitent who longs for the forgiveness of his sins, the remission of the debt owing to God¹—

(1) We must humble ourselves before Him, and come to Him with lowliness of mind,² and look to and own Him to be our Lord as this servant who *fell down and worshipped his lord*.

(2) There must be the acknowledgment of sin. As with this man, so with us: there must be no defence of our guilt, no extenuation of our rebellion and disobedience, but a frank confession of our failure in that righteousness which God expects from each of us. I am indeed a sinner, a debtor to Thee, but *have patience with me, O Lord*.

(3) We must live to His glory, undoing, so far as in us lies, the evil wrought during our past life, according to the example of this servant, who promised, however little he was able to perform it, to *pay all* that was owing. Note, that this servant says nothing of giving aught to his lord; whatever he may bring to him will be but a paying back that which he owed. So whatever we may do by self-denial and by self-sacrifice to the glory of our Lord will be but a rendering to Him that which is already His; and yet, bold though these words seem in the mouth of the debtor, they are by God's mercy and grace true when they come from the heart of the sinner.

Remigius.

Emm. ab Incarnat.

Have patience with me is the cry of the penitent to Him who is patience and mercy itself. Have patience, for Thou art patience, and *I will pay Thee all*. Poor though I am, Thy grace will enable me to give up my whole self, body, soul, desires, and possessions to Thee; and in giving up myself I fulfil Thy command and Thy gracious will, which says, *Son, give me thine heart*, and, in commanding this, gives me grace to obey.³

Paulus de Palatio.

¹ "Tres breves in Evangelio reperi-mus orationes à Domino mirè commen-datas, quarum hæc una est. Altera est publicani à longe stantis et verentis oculos ad cælum levare, pectusque tundentis et dicentis; *Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori*. Reliqua est cen-turionis, qui languenti servo salutem imploraturus, non se dignum arbitratus est ad cujus domum veniret Dominus sed cum ingenti fide et humilitate loquebatur, dicens, *Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum, sed tantum dic verbo et sanabitur puer meus*. Porro istarum tuum orationum secunda melior est quam prima et tertia quam secunda. Prima obtinuit totius debiti

dimissionem, secunda promeruit publi-cano justificationem, dicente Domino. *Descendit hic justificatus in domum suam ab illo*. Tertia verò accipere meruit ab ore Christi eximiam commen-dationem. Nam sequentibus dixit: *Amen dico vobis, non inveni tantam fidem in Israël*."—Royard.

² "Quemadmodum superbia initium est omnis peccati, ita initium justifica-tionis humiliatio est, per quam, pro-priam culpam, atque ingrati animi vitium, ac Dei justitiam, fidei lumine agnoscimus."—Salmeron.

³ "Ille reddit omnia qui de omnibus quæ peccavit veram gerit pœnitudinem et qui per ea omnia pœnitentiam agit

(27) *Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.*

Chrysostom.

Luke xxiii.
42, 43.
Alvernua.

In the greatness of his compassion, the king is represented as giving more than the servant asked. He prayed for time, for a delay which should enable him to pay the debt—his master forgives him the debt itself. Thus does Christ, in the boundlessness of His love and compassion to us, give the penitent more than he asks or desires—so great is the force of prayer, so that there is nothing on earth more powerful than a man whilst praying. What He is here set before us as doing Christ did in reality on the cross, when He granted to the penitent thief, who prayed that He would *remember* him, that he should be with Him that day in His kingdom.

In the forgiveness of the sinner, two benefits are here noted—

(1) Christ looses us from our sins, unbinds from our hands and feet those fetters which sin has placed there, frees us and restores to us the power of resisting sin, whilst He strengthens us to resist the temptations of the evil one.

Coster.

Th. Aquinas.

(2) He forgives us the sins we have already committed, blotting them from His book, and cleansing our soul from past defilements. But He does this from His own *compassion*. He forgives us when we are penitent, yet it is not our penitence but His mercy which frees us from the debt.¹

Boyard.

Let us remember that our Lord does not pardon us before He takes account of our actions; so must the examination of ourselves, the consciousness and acknowledgment of our iniquity, the sight and the sorrow for sin, precede all forgiveness from God.

By the conduct of the king to his servant we are taught these truths respecting God—

(1) That He takes notice of all our actions, and will call upon us hereafter to give account for all our deeds.

(2) That He is full of compassion,² will listen to the

per quæ Deum offendit quæ sunt corpus, anima et terreus facultates. Secundò dico quod omnia reddit qui rectè credens in Deum committit se virtuti illius inestimabilis precii, quo mundi peccata solvuntur. Omnia reddit, dum suam profitens paupertatem, humiliter cognoscit totalem ad satisfactionem se esse prorsus impotentem.”—*Boyard.*

¹ “Dolor pœnitentiæ non causat re-

missionem sed misericordia Domini: unde ad Roman. ix. 26, *Non est currentis sed miserentis Dei.*”—*Th. Aquinas.*

² “*Le laissa aller, et lui remit sa dette.* Dieu ne pardonne jamais à demi. Il remet les plus grandes dettes aussi aisément que les plus petites; mais pourvû qu’on ne se repente pas à demi, et que la volonté de faire pénitence soit pleine et entière.”—*Quésnel.*

prayers of every sinner, and will forgive all those who, in real penitence, approach His throne.

(3) That He will punish with severity all who persist in their sins, and who, in the face of His mercy, turn away ungratefully and continue to sin against Him and their fellow-creatures. Voragine.

(4) That the example of mercy in God is a call to us to be merciful to our fellow-men. The All-Merciful wills that we should show mercy, so that in us may be seen the image of our Maker, and that His likeness, who is love, may be reflected in the mirror of our heart, so as to be evident to all men. Lee.

(28) *But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.* (29) *And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.* (30) *And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.*

As the greatness of the debt of the first servant makes it probable that the debtor was the steward or one of the upper servants of the king, so the smallness of the second debt, *an hundred pence*, shows that this latter which was owed to the steward was the debt of one of the inferior servants.¹ Tostatus.

Every word here aggravates the sin of the servant whom his lord had forgiven.

(1) It was *the same servant* who had just been forgiven.

(2) He *went out* and committed this sin against his fellow immediately after he had been pardoned by his lord.

(3) The man whom he *found* was not a stranger, not one of an inferior order to himself, as he was to his master, but it was a *fellow-servant*.

(4) This one owed him a debt far inferior to that from which he had himself just been released; it was only one of

¹ "What doe our brethren owe us? *A hundred pence.* Observe here the Roman peny is the eighth of an ounce, is 7½d.: so that the whole summe is but *iii. iis. ivd.*

"What doe we owe our God? *Three thousand talents.* Now here also observe that a talent is 750 ounces of silver, which after five shillings the

ounce is 187½. 10s. And the whole summe is 1,875,000l. —one thousand thousand, eight hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds. And, therefore, seeing our Father so freely forgave us so great a sum, we should not stick to forgive our brother so small a debt."—*Ward on St. Matthew.*

an hundred pence, which, perhaps because it was so small, he does not specify.¹

(5) He did not merely compel him to make payment of that which he owed him, but he ill-treated him: *he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat*.

(6) He was not moved from his purpose although his *fellow-servant* entreated him in the same way that he himself had just besought his lord.

(7) He refused even to grant him that delay which he himself had just asked of the king.

Salmeron.

(8) He led him to prison. So great is the contrast between the harshness of man towards an offending brother and the tenderness of God towards the sinner.

Ferus.

Alb. Magnus.

He *went out* from his lord's presence and then sinned against his brother; so do men sin when they depart from the presence of God; when through their sins they are no longer conscious of this nearness of God and forget that *Thou God seest me*.² Thus we are significantly told that

John xiii. 30.

Judas *went out* from his Lord when he betrayed Him, went out bodily and also spiritually. He *went out* from a state of slavery to freedom; *went out* laden with mercies from his

Hugo de S.
Charo.

lord only to forget the mercy that had been rendered to him. Those only who depart from God are unmindful of the mercies received from Him. Those who abide by His

Theophylact.

side, and live in consciousness of His presence, are merciful even as He is merciful. All sin arises in this way: it springs from forgetfulness of Christ and of His mercies, and

Gen. xvi. 13.

begins in a going out from His presence.³ *Thou God seest me*—a remembrance of Christ's presence—is the penitent's

Coster.

best preservative from sin.

The smallness of the debt owing by the one servant to the other, when contrasted with the largeness of the debt owing by the servant to his lord, tells us forcibly this truth, that the offence given to us by our fellows, their trespass against us, is as nothing compared with the infinite amount of our

¹ "*Redde quod debes*. Non exprimit debitum, sed confuse loquitur; quasi erubesceret, centum denariorum solutionem per vim exigere, cum sibi ab hero suo decem millia talenta ultrò fuerint condonata."—*Emm. ab Incarnatione*.

² "Hoc modo et Cain à facie Domini legimus egressum (Gen. iv. 16). Sed et de ipso diabolo, qui omnium impiorum caput est, scriptum legimus: *Egressusque est Satan à facie Domini*

(Job i. 12). Notandum est quod Evangelista dicit egressum à Domino servum qui in conservum sævit; quoniam (ut dicit Theoph.) nullus qui in Deo manet, compassionis expers est. Sed quia Deus charitas est, quisquis in Deo manet, etiam in charitate manet, et Deus in illo manet."—*Royard*.

³ "Si egressus non fuisset, minimè suffocasset. Suffocabat autem, et suffocat adhuc hodie, quoniam à Rege exierat."—*Paschasius*.

sin against God; and that if God can forgive us the *ten thousand talents* which we owe, we are bound to forgive our brother the *hundred pence* which at the most he owes to us. Olshausen.

As the lord in this parable did, so does God; before He pardons the debt He takes account of it, brings to the sinner's mind the consciousness of sin, and makes him feel its burden and weight. Royard.

(31) *So when his fellow-servants¹ saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.*

Their pity for their fellow-servant, their sorrow at the harshness of the unfeeling creditor, are mentioned, not their anger against the ungrateful and cruel debtor. Their pity is contrasted with his pitilessness. Olshausen.

The *fellow-servants* of man are—

(1) The angels of God in heaven, who always behold the things done on earth. Rev. xxi. 9. Gorranus. Hugo de S. Charo.

(2) Men upon earth, whose natural instincts are opposed to acts of harshness, and whose hearts, being open to God, proclaim aloud the deeds of wickedness perpetrated by man to man. Royard. Chemnitz.

(3) And more especially are the *fellow-servants* of man the ministers of God, who are bound to reprove men for all acts of injustice and wrong done to their fellow-men, and to preach the duty of forgiveness. Dion. Carth.

He who injures one of his *fellow-servants* offends all the children of our common Father—all the servants of the Great King. Let us, therefore, be careful not to commit any injustice towards our brother, since, though he may bear it patiently and forgive the wrong, yet others will not be silent, but will tell *unto their Lord all that is done*. Ferns.

(32) *Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me.*

All that debt. In these words the lord of the *wicked servant* recalls to his mind the greatness of the debt which had been forgiven him, and by contrast shows the smallness of the debt for which he who had received mercy of his lord thus acted harshly to his *fellow-servant*. *Because thou desiredst it.* He says not because thou asked it, for this Konigstejn.

¹ The Syriac version reads *their* fellow-servants both of the creditor *fellow-servants*, those who were the and debtor.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

the servant did not presume to do, though he did desire it.¹

The wickedness of the unmerciful servant consisted in this:—

(1) He was ungrateful to his lord, and forgetful of the mercy which had been just shown to himself.

Alvernus.

(2) He was merciless to his fellow-servant, to whom, by the fact of their common nature, he was bound to show compassion.

Chrysostom.

And here let us note, as an indication of the abhorrence with which God views every act of oppression and harshness to our fellows, that this servant is not called *wicked* because of his sin against his lord;² he is not reproached for the greatness of his debt; but when he behaves cruelly to his fellow-servant, then he seems to add to his original sin against God, and is spoken of as *wicked*.³

(33) *Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?*⁴

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Ph. Diaz.

Luke vi. 36.

Shouldest not thou, a servant and a debtor, have done as I, thy lord, did to thee? If the lord can have patience, and show mercy by forgiving, shall not the servant do so to his fellow-servant? In other words, Is not all that God does to us both a motive and an example of the mercy which we are therefore bound to show to others? Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Matt. xxii.
12.
Remigius.

To this remonstrance of his master the unmerciful servant made no reply: his conscience bore witness to the reasonableness of this reproof. When we come to stand at God's judgment bar, all those excuses by which we have so often deceived ourselves in this life will be forgotten, the unreality of all extenuation of our guilt will be then seen: like the man who had not on a wedding-garment, and like this unmerciful servant, we shall be speechless.

¹ "Non rogavit quidem desertis verbis, sed ipsâ suâ, afflictione et miseria: afflictio enim sine voce vocalis est."—*Emm. ab Incarnatione*.

² "Ὅτε μὲν μυρία τάλαντα ὤφειλεν, οὐκ ἐκάλεσε πονηρὸν, οὐδὲ ὑβρισην, ἀλλ' ἠλέησεν· ὅτε δὲ περὶ τὸν σύνδουλον ἀγνωμῶν ἐγένετο, τότε λέγει, πονηρὲ δοῦλε."—*S. Chrysostom.*

³ "Sicut virtus misericordiæ omnes alias virtutes in se continere videtur, ita esse humanitatis et compassionis expertem omnia vitia inculcat."—*Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

⁴ Rabanus Maurus, urging the historical application of the parable, here remarks: "Liberatus ergo de captivitate Judaicus populus non solum Redemptori suo gratias minime egit, sed etiam peccatis pristinis peccata nova superadjiciens, in contemptum Domini sui, conservum suum—id est, gentilem populum—quasi sibi obnoxium fatigare non distulit. Quasi ergo sibi debitorem credens, circumcisionem et ceremonias legis ab eo expetivit, et Christi gratiam, quod ad salutem illis idonea non esset, calumnians respuit."

When we bear meekly the injuries of others—when from our hearts we forgive our brother the trespasses committed against us—this act of forgiveness is a cause of mercy and blessing to ourselves. We obtain thereby—

(1) Deliverance from our own sins ; power over ourselves to resist temptation.

(2) Fortitude and patience in enduring trials.

(3) Compassion and love towards others, which are sources of peace in this life ; for if we have overcome the impulse to anger against those who offend and injure us, we shall more easily obtain the habit of loving and acting charitably towards those who are our *fellow-servants* and brethren.

(4) We shall be freed from anger, which is a perpetual torment to the soul, and shall have that deliverance from hatred and malice and revenge which is man's most perfect freedom. Chrysostom.

(34) *And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors,¹ till he should pay all that was due unto him.*

This parable exhibits God both in His love and His justice, in His tenderness and His severity, unbounded in His love and austere in His judgments ; at once merciful and full of compassion, and yet just and equitable in His dealings with men ; merciful in hearing the supplication of the sinner, and in giving more than the sinner dares to ask, and yet just to him who persists in his sinfulness and makes the Lord's mercy a cause of hardening his heart against his brother.² Hartung.

The idea of Divine wrath is not opposed to that love which

¹ "Of the power which the Roman law gave to the creditor over the debtor take this account from Aulus Gellius, lib. xx. 1, as a specimen. By the laws of the Twelve Tables, after legal proof of the debt, and a month's interval of suspense, the creditor was at liberty to seize on the person of the debtor ; to fasten him in the stocks ; to bind him with fetters of fifteen pounds in weight ; to restrict him to a stated allowance of food, &c. Lastly, if there were more creditors than one, then at a stated time the injunction of the law was : 'Tertius nudinis partes secanto, si plus minusve secuerunt, se fraude esto : ' that is, as Gellius interprets it, 'secare, si vellent, atque partiri corpus addicti

sibi hominis permiserunt.'

"Learned men, indeed, have contended that the meaning of the law was not to authorize the cutting of the body of the debtor in pieces, but the sale of his person, the auction of his property, to be divided among his creditors. Yet Aulus Gellius understood it literally ; so did Dionysius of Halicarnassus (xvi. 9 of Maius' epitome) ; Quintillian (III. vi. 84) ; and Tertullian (v. 14, Apologeticus 4)."—*Greswell's Exposition of the Parables and Gospels*, vol. ii. pp. 407, 408, n.

² "Non habet modum ejus misericordia non habet finem ejus justitia : *justitia tua, justitia in æternum.*"—*Hartung.*

Olshausen.

is the characteristic of God, but rather the wrath of God is the loving manifestation of Himself in His opposition to all evil.

It is no longer the original sin of the servant, his default as to what was due to his lord, that is to be punished; he is now condemned for hard-heartedness and cruelty to his *fellow-servant*. Hence we read of no steps taken to sell the property of the debtor until payment can be made out of the proceeds; nor are his wife and children ordered to be sold. It is personal punishment which is to be inflicted upon him for his hard-heartedness.

A question, however, has arisen as to the justice of the lord in calling upon this servant to *pay all that was due unto him* after he had once been forgiven and his debt wholly remitted. The teaching of the parable depends, as it seems, but little on this circumstance; and yet in this there is nothing strange nor unjust. Let it be remembered that the property of the debtor, *all that he had*, was, confessedly, in the power of his master: it ceased, in fact, to be his upon his default of payment. And since this is so, it is clear that the debt owing to him was no longer his to claim, but was entirely at the disposal of his lord; for even by the laws of England, the debts owing to a debtor become the property of his creditors upon any act of bankruptcy, and for the bankrupt to exact or to receive such debt is not an act of rigour only, but one of fraud. When then, after remission of his debt, this servant proceeded to exact that which was no longer his right, the very act of remission became annulled, and the right of his lord to claim the debt returned in full force. So that there is nothing strange or unjust in this act of the king. There is, again, nothing to surprise us in his so doing, if, as seems most probable, from the largeness of the amount owing by the unmerciful servant, and from the fact of his being first called upon to render his account, he was the steward of his lord's property. His defalcation, then, would probably have arisen, at least, in some measure, from the non-payment on the part of his fellow but inferior servant.¹ This latter debt, then, was cancelled when the first debt was forgiven, and to exact it was unjust—an additional sin to that originally forgiven by his lord.

How great and aggravated the sin of this unmerciful servant was, may be gathered from two circumstances—

(1) We read nothing before of his lord being *wroth*: his

¹ He was not merely *ὁμόδουλος*, a slave equally with his oppressor, but he was *σύνδουλος*, a servant or slave to the same master.

former punishment was corrective—not inflicted in anger, but for amendment. But when he acted thus unmercifully to his fellow, we read significantly that *his lord was wroth*. Chrysostom.

(2) Because of his debt he was to have been sold, and to pass into the possession of another master; for his severity to his fellow-servant he was to be *delivered to the tormentors*. His guilt was increased by his ingratitude and want of mercy, and hence his punishment was made heavier. Alford.

Let us remember the solemn truth here presented to us. Past sins revive in the heart of the unforgiving, and cruelty to others robs us of that grace which God has freely given us.¹ God, indeed, forgives us on the express condition that we also forgive others. This condition, expressed or implied, enters into all our prayers. It is clearly stated in the Lord's Prayer, which is the model for all our prayers, *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us*. Let those who break the compact which they enter into when they pray, remember that, as a consequence, they themselves lose the benefit of that pardon which they have prayed for and may have already obtained.² For pardon is no mere formal act, no mere declaration of forgiveness, such as by the laws of man may be pronounced; it is the engrafting again of the lifeless branch into the trunk of the good olive-tree, the restoration of the sinning members to full communion with their Head. If, then, after such restoration, we act over again our old sins or plunge into fresh iniquity, with the revival of sin comes also the revival of the inseparable punishment for sin, separation from Christ.³ Hardouin.
Taylor's Life of Christ, pt. ii. sect. 12, disc. ix. § 31.
Nicole.
Rom. xi. 17.
Trench.

(35) *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.* Prov. xxi. 13
Matt. vi. 12,
14.
Mark xi. 26.
James ii. 13.

The forgiveness of injuries is here pressed upon us—

(1) By the example of our *heavenly Father*, who is ready at all times to forgive every sinner who repents and acknowledges his sin.

¹ "Redire peccata dimissa, ubi fraterna charitas non est, apertissime Dominus docet de illo servo."—*August. de Baptismo cont. Donat. c. 12.*

² "Non reviviscunt quidem remissa peccata, sed ingratitude superveniens tanto majus est peccatum quanto majus fuit remissionis beneficium."—*Avancinus.*

³ "If faith does not work by love, GOSP. VOL. III.

it ceases to justify. If the man bind himself once again to his old evil nature, the absolution already pronounced is annulled. The characters of the discharge are traced (to use another similitude) as in sympathetic ink, and appear or disappear according to the greater or less glow of the faith and love of the pardoned debtor."—*Plumptre.*

(2) Because we desire Him to forgive us our sins; and it is, therefore, only just that we should do as we desire should be done unto us, and should forgive others.

Matt. vii. 12.

(3) Because Christ commands this, not only by His example, but also by His direct precepts.

(4) Because every act of revenge, every deed of unmercifulness, is done to a servant—yea, to a child—of God, and so done to our *heavenly Father* Himself.¹

Matt. Faber.

If we are taught by this parable, and by the words with which our Blessed Lord applies it to our hearts and consciences, that our Father in heaven is full of mercy and compassion, and ready at all times to forgive those who come to Him in penitence, we are also taught that He is a God of justice and of severity to those who resist His call, who will not repent, but continue to offend against Him, and are a scandal and offence to their fellow-servants.

Ferus in
Dom.

So likewise. By these words our Lord teaches us how to overcome anger, bitterness, and revenge—

(1) By meditation on His life and passion, who came into the world to fulfil the purpose of the Father, who *so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* If the Father then so loved us, we also ought to love the brethren of Christ.

John iii. 16.

(2) By the remembrance of the greatness of God, and therefore of the greatness of our sin against His infinite majesty, and of that punishment to which He might justly have condemned us.

Coster.

My heavenly Father. It is significant that our Blessed Lord here says, *My Father*, not yours, as He does when speaking of God's love to man. Now, when speaking of His justice on those who continue in their sins, or who again fall into their old wickedness, He says, *My Father*, as though, in ceasing to love and obey Him, we removed Him from us, and were unworthy to call Him our Father. And the love and mercy which is to be shown to an erring

Chrysostom.

Theophylact.

¹ "Si cuiquam videtur hoc præceptum parcendi difficile, intelligat id esse quia ipse nondum vocatus est ad reddendum quod debet, nondum sensit vocem exactoris; nondum humiliter Deo supplicavit, nondum in animo sensit quantum gratiæ acceperit. Spiritus Sanctus nondum arguit eum de peccato: et destitutus dulcedine Spiritus, amarus est corde ad proximos. Postquam igitur ad salutem necessaria est injuriarum acceptarum remissio, et hæc

sine Spiritu Sancto præstari, ut Christus præcepit, non potest; studeamus hunc benignum ad remittendum Spiritum votis supplicibus et precibus nobis conciliare, bonorumque operum studio Illum promereri, ut Patrem nobis remittentem nostra delicta habeamus, et sanctissimæ charitatis legi satisfaciamus quam tulit Dominus noster Jesus Christus, qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto semper vivit et regnat, in sempiterna secula. Amen."—*Salmeron.*

and a repentant brother is to be *from the heart*; it is not to be a mere lip restoration, nor is it sufficient if we show outward signs of concord and restoration; we must do it from the *heart*—that is, wholly and without reservation. And this injunction, let us remember, is a command pressing upon all. It is *every one* who is here addressed. It is not some one or another who may chance to be indebted for mercy to our *heavenly Father*, but all men. All have received His forgiveness in the death of Christ; all men have partaken of the mercy of God; all may obtain the pardon of their sins, for to all is this pardon offered; all, therefore, are called upon to show the like mercy, and to forgive their brethren *their trespasses*. Cajetan.

How, then, shall we follow the example of our *heavenly Father* in this particular?—

(1) We must forgive trespasses *quickly*. No sooner did the debtor, in the parable, pray to his lord for delay than he forgave him his debt. This is a characteristic of God's mercy, that He is ever *ready to forgive*.¹ Man is slow to show mercy; God, on the other hand, is always proffering forgiveness, even before the sinner asks it at His hand. This contrast between the readiness of God to pardon and the reluctance of man is shown in the anger which the prophet Jonah felt at the forgiveness of God to the people of Nineveh. Ps. lxxxvi. 5. Jonah iv. 1—11.

(2) We must forgive *all* the trespasses of our brother: the lord forgave the whole debt. So does God remit all our sins: He *forgiveth all our iniquities, and healeth all our diseases*. Ps. ciii. 3.

(3) We must not only forgive, not only do no hurt to those who have sinned against us, we must actively do good. The debtor entreats his lord merely to have patience with him and to wait, and promises that then he shall be paid: the lord does far more than this, he remits the debt itself. So does our *heavenly Father* give more to the penitent than he can desire—not only pardon for the past, but a return to favour, and strength to do His will for the future.² Ward.

Finally, we may gather from this parable of our Blessed Lord, that the reckoning which God makes with us is fourfold—

(1) Of those things which He has committed to our charge—all gifts of nature and of grace; all opportunities for good;

¹ "Nothing makes men so like God as the forgiveness of injuries."—*S. Chrysostom*.

² "It cannot be imagined God should oblige us to give pardon oftener than

He will give it Himself, especially since He hath expressed ours to be a tithe of a proportionable reception of His."—*Taylor's Life of Christ*, part ii. sect. xii.

Ludolph.

all influence by which we may advance the glory of God and the happiness of our fellow-men, and of which a right use is required; all things which we have *wasted*, as the unjust steward, of whom our Blessed Lord speaks in another of His parables.

Luke xvi. 1.

(2) The good things intrusted to us, which we have neglected to use, which we have not so much wasted and dissipated as we have suffered to lie unused without benefit to our fellow-men. Of this reckoning we have an instance in the parable of the talents, and our sin in neglecting what God has given to us is exhibited in the indignation of the Lord at the conduct of that servant who had buried his talent in the earth.

Luke xix. 20.

(3) God will reckon with us as to the use which we have made of those things which have been entrusted to us, and which we have, it may be, in a small and insufficient degree employed for His glory. Of this we have an instance in the parable of the two debtors.

Luke vii. 41
—47.

(4) He will judge us for the active evil wrought in return for the good which has been done to us. Of this more hateful form of sin, of this ingratitude towards God, we have an instance in the present parable.

Salmeron.

••• “Domine Jesu Christe, mihi indigno propitius concede, ut fratrem peccantem verbis opportunè corripiendo emendem, et si non verbis, saltem orationibus et bonis exemplis hoc facere non desistam. Da mihi etiam ut in unitate Ecclesiæ et charitate fraterna permanendo merear in orationibus exaudiri, et Te per favorem et auxilium

in medio nostrum experiri, qui habitationem Tibi in pacificis collocasti. Insuper et hoc tribue mihi, ut quotienscunque peccaverit frater in me, totiens dimittam ei, ita quod nec rancor interior nec rancoris signum exterius in me valeat aliququaliter reperiri. Amen.”—
Ludolph.

THE TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. MATTHEW XXII. 15—22.

(15) *Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle¹ Him in His talk.* Mark xii. 13.
Luke xx. 20.

Then—when Christ had spoken the parables of the two sons who were sent to work in their father's vineyard, that of the wicked husbandmen and the taking of the vineyard from them, and that of the marriage feast from which those who were first called were, by their own fault, rejected—they immediately *took counsel to entangle Him in His talk.* Matt. xxi. 23
—31; xxi.
23—46;
xxii. 2—14. *Then*, when irritated at the application of these parables to themselves, when confounded by the wisdom of His reply to their questions, and when the warning of what would befall those who should kill *the heir* should have led them to pause in their design to put Him to death, and have caused them to repent of their design to slay the Lord of life and glory, they hardened their hearts against His teaching; they refused to be warned by these parables, and sought fresh means to *entangle Him in His talk* and to destroy Him.² Salmeron.
Jansen Yp.
Matt. xxi. 20.
Chrysostom.
Dion. Carth. Time, indeed, was pressing; it was now but two days from the feast at which they were resolved to crucify Him; the Wednesday in the Holy Week had come, and as yet they had no sufficient accusation by which the jealousy of the Roman Governor could be aroused; and hence the zeal and activity with which they sought to ensnare Him: *then went* Sylvester.

¹ “Παγιδεύσωσιν, illaquearent, irretirent: verbum ἀπὸ τῆς παγίδος, à laqueo, derivatum, quales à venatoribus figuntur.” — *Luca Brugensis*. “Παγίς Græcis idem est quod Latine laqueus, quo fera vel avis capitur. Et ita insinuat quod volebant capere ad mortem. Hinc Lucas, quasi vim verbi hujus explicans, subjungit: *Ut trade-*

rent Illum principatui et potestati præsidis, nimirum ut reum mortis.” — *Salmeron*.

² “Τότε· πότε; ὅτε μάλιστα κατα-
νυγῆναι ἴδει, ὅτε ἐκπλαγῆναι τὴν
φιλανθρωπίαν, ὅτε φοβηθῆναι τὰ μελ-
λοντα, ὅτε ἀπὸ τῶν παρελθόντων καὶ
γὰρ περὶ τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦσαι
ἐχρῆν.” — *S. Chrysostom*.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

they out from His presence, and from hearing His words, and formed a conspiracy to *entangle Him in His talk*.

Ps. lxi. 23,
P. B. Vera.

Matt. xiv. 27.
John viii. 58,
59.
Coster.

Christ's mercies and Christ's teaching have ever been made the occasion, through the perversity of sinners, of fresh hardening of heart, and of a deepening of the sin from which they should have drawn men. Thus are the gifts of our heavenly Father often marred by the evil will of man, and thus *the things that should have been for their wealth* are made to *them an occasion of falling*. The same gracious word (*ἐγώ εἰμι*) which drew Peter from the ship, and prompted him to cast himself into the water to come to Christ, caused the Jews to take up stones to cast at Jesus.¹

Lienard.

Tostatus.

Dion. Carth.

Coster.

The object of these men was not to ascertain the truth, but to *entangle Him* who was the Truth itself. They judged it impossible for Him to answer the questions which they were putting to Him without either offending the zealots amongst the Jews or the servants of the civil governor; and that whatever He might say would either diminish, if not destroy, His influence with the people, or would furnish a pretext for calling in the assistance of the Romans in their conspiracy against Christ, by representing Him as a fomenter of popular discontent. And the words *in His talk* are significant. They were unable to find any shadow for an accusation against Him with reference to His deeds in the whole course of His life; but because they knew that few were perfect in their words, few whose tongue at one time or another has not betrayed them into unseemly or inconsiderate speech, therefore they hoped to entangle Him in this respect. He, however, who was holy and unblameable in His life, and full of mercy in His deeds, was proof also against this snare.

Quesnel.

As when in the wilderness Satan tempted Christ by manifold temptations, so now the various tempters of our Blessed Lord are not disheartened by one failure. When repulsed in one direction, they immediately take counsel how they may ensnare Him in another. Let His members remember that in this also is their Divine Head their forerunner and their example. The devil is not finally repulsed in his assaults upon us when he is foiled in one attack. He retires, and renews his attempt in a new, and often in a more subtle, form. So that victory against Satan, success against any one form of temptation, so far from being a reason to lay aside our arms, is a direct call to greater watchfulness and for increased vigilance.

¹ "Sicut ignis, quanto amplius ligna suscepit, tanto major excrescit; sic animus malus, quanto magis veritatem

audierit, eo amplius in malitiam excitatur."—*Jacobus à Voragine*.

(16) *And they sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that Thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest Thou for any man: for Thou regardest not the person of men.*

The Herodians are by some supposed to have been a sect amongst the Jews. Their tenets, however, were more secular than theological, and they would seem rather to have been the courtiers, the guards, and those who, for various reasons, were the partisans, of King Herod. As he was at this time in Jerusalem, it is likely that the personal attendants of Herod are particularly referred to by this name.¹ These men, by reason of their exaggerated views of the civil authority, were the direct antagonists of the Pharisees; and the unscrupulous nature of the hostility of the enemies of Christ is shown here and elsewhere in the cordial union of opposing parties in their attempt to ensnare and destroy Him. Thus, on this occasion, when the Pharisees were unable to reply to the parables of Christ, when they could not turn aside the power of His words, they proceeded to take *counsel* with their opponents, and, in company with the Herodians, sought to *entangle* Him. They thought to involve our Blessed Lord in this dilemma—

E. p. Epiphanius.

Haymo.

Barradius.

(1) The Pharisees, who were looked up to by the people, and were regarded as the great doctors of the nation, taught that the people of God were lawfully exempt from paying tribute to the Roman power. If, then, Christ should contradict this teaching, He would be unpopular with the people.

(2) The Herodians, who taught that the people could not exist without the care of the prince, held that the people were bound to pay tribute to this prince, though he happened to be the representative of a foreign power. If, then, Christ contradicted this, He must needs offend the civil power, and these satellites of Herod might at once apprehend

Arias Mont.

¹ “*Cum Herodianis.* Quinam dicantur Herodiani non satis constat. Aliqui putant sic appellatos, quod Herodem Messiam esse crediderint; alii censent Herodianos fuisse Herodis milites; alii, Herodis ministros, qui tributa colligebant; alii, nobiles aliquot viros ex Herodis aula, qui tunc Hierosolymis agebat; alii, eos qui tributum Cæsari persolvendum contendebant, qui propterea Herodiani vocati

sunt, quod Herodes, qui Cæsari adlabatur, et gratiam illius captabat, illis faveret: quæ videtur probabilior et verior explicatio, et est Origenis, Hieronymi, et Cyrilli, et, ex recentioribus, Maldonati in hunc locum.” — *Menchius.*

See also chap. xxxiii. of *Dr. John Gregory's Notes and Observations upon some Passages of Scripture.* London, 1665.

Luke xxiii. 5.
Tostatus.

Him as one who stirred up the people; or might even proceed to slay Him.

Luke xx. 20.

For some reason or another, instead of coming forward themselves to entrap Christ, the chief persons among the Scribes and the Pharisees sent *their disciples* in company with the Herodians. It may be that they were unable to overcome their repugnance to an open alliance with their opponents, or that they sent *their disciples* from the belief that these might entrap Him the more easily, as being less known than themselves, so that for this reason He might be less circumspect in His answers to these younger Pharisees. *We*

Alex. Nat.

Bengel.

know, they say, that Thou art a *Master* able to solve all doubts and to answer all questions;¹ *we know*, by the works which Thou hast done, and by the doctrines which Thou hast taught, *that Thou art true, and that Thou teachest the way of God in*

Alb. Magnus.

Tirinus.

Luca Brug.

Haymo.

Ps. cxix. 1.

Matt. v. 8.

truth,² how, that is, man must live; the way by which he must walk if he would attain to God and to eternal salvation—that undefiled way in which God calls us to walk if we would come to Him. *Thou teachest* that law, and those commandments of God, by keeping which we may attain eternal life. For *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Yea, Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.* The hypocrisy with which our Blessed Lord had charged the Pharisees is made evident by these words. At other times, and when away from the presence of Christ, they spoke the thoughts of their hearts; their language then was: *He deceiveth the people. Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. Or again: Thou hast a devil. This man is not of God.*

John vii. 12;
vii. 52;
viii. 48;
ix. 16.
Chrysostom.

Boys.

That a man may speak the truth at all times, and in the face of all danger, he must have knowledge, zeal, and boldness, and all these three the Pharisees ascribe unto our Blessed Lord.³ For three things, let us remember, hinder truth:—

(1) The want of knowledge of what is true; the not being able to discern between truth and falsehood.

¹ “*Magister.* Benè magistrum vocant, cui questionem solvendam proponunt; soli enim sapientes et qui magisterio fulgent in dubiis adeundi sunt. Illi tamen non discendi studio accedunt, sed calumniandi; et, ut Chrysostomus ait, magistrum vocant cujus nolunt esse discipuli.”—*Emman. ab Incarnatione.*

² “*In veritate*—id est, verè, fideliter, purè, ac sincerè, absque fūco et omni pravi affectus corruptelâ.”—*Emman.*

ab Incarnatione in Evang. Matt.

³ “There is a double truth; to wit:—First, *veritas Christi*, the truth written; and of this they speak in this place, *Thou teachest the way of God in truth.* Secondly, *Veritas Christus*, the Truth begotten; and of this Christ speaketh, John xiv. 6, *I am the Truth.* Now Christ did the former doctrinally, and He was the Truth essentially.”—*Ward on St. Matthew.*

(2) The want of honesty and reality with reference to the truth; so that men who know the truth intellectually, yet disregard it by their lives.

(3) The fear of man, human infirmity, which causes men to hide the knowledge which they possess—even these men, in effect, say that many would declare the truth which they know, but are restrained by fear of Cæsar. In their attempt to take our Blessed Lord by their flattering words, they tell Him that none of these things can hinder the declaration of the truth from His lips, since He is *true* to Himself, and manifests the *way of God* by the truth of His life, and fears no man. He was true in His life—*Thou art true*. He was true in His doctrines—*Thou teachest the way of God in truth*. He was true in the accord of His knowledge and His doctrines with all His actions—*Thou regardest not the person of men*.¹

Luca Brug.

Tostatus.

The subtilty of the temptation lay in this, that these words of the Pharisees were used to provoke Christ to say that He feared God more than Cæsar, and that He must therefore pronounce against the lawfulness of paying tribute, which declaration they knew would make Him at once obnoxious to the Roman authorities, and give weight to that accusation upon which they had already determined, and of which, two days after, they made use against Him.

Jerome.

(17) *Tell us therefore, What thinkest Thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?*

Acta v. 37.

The questioners, let us remember, on this occasion were persons who were neither inclined to yield submission to the authority of God nor to that of Cæsar. The dominion of Cæsar, however, had been imposed upon them on account of their sin, in order to assist in bringing them back from sin to God.

Stier.

¹ “Via Dei divinorum mandatorum obedientia et justitia est. Dicitur autem via Dei, tum quia à Deo monstrata est, tum quia nos ad Dei felicitatem et gloriam ducit. Hujus autem viæ doctor Christus est. *Hæc est*, inquit Propheta, *via, ambulate in ea, et non declinetis neque ad dexteram, neque ad sinistram* [Isaiah xxx. 21]. *Vias Tuas, Domine, demonstra mihi, et semitas Tuas edoce me* [Ps. xxv. 4]. Sed quoniam hæc viæ nos ad sempiternam felicitatem ducunt, quæ sint ad hanc viam necessaria expendamus. Viatores tribus indigent; viatico, baculo, et pera. Viaticum nos-

trum est Eucharistia. Baculus est memoria Dominicæ crucis. Baculo nos sustentamus, et canes abigimus. Utrumque autem nobis Dominicæ crucis memoria præstat: qua et fidei nostræ infirmitatem Ejus meritis roboramus, et pravas dæmonis suggestiones crucifixi Domini et vulnerum Ejus contemplatione profligamus. Pera, quæ in hoc itinere necessaria est, est eleemosyna et misericordia. . . . Hæc est igitur illa pera, ille saculus ad hoc iter necessarius, qui ne in ipsa quidem morte nos deseret.”—*Ludov. Granat.*

What thinkest Thou? They ask not what is good or evil in itself, but what Christ Himself thinks of this matter of *tribute*. They were come not to have any doubts removed, but to press Him to express an opinion on which they might accuse Him to the Roman governor.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Is it lawful? that is, ought they, *in foro conscientie*, to pay this? They do not ask whether they may submit to force and pay the tribute, which Christ might have answered without necessarily offending either the people or the partisans of Herod. Their question is, whether they were not offending God by paying such tribute. And they professed to ask this, not from a close-fisted desire to save their money, but from a scrupulous conscience.

Cajetan.

Lucas Brug.

Matt. xvii. 24
—27.

Exod. xxx.
13.

Tostatus.

The tribute which we read on another occasion our Blessed Lord was called upon to pay, and which He commanded Peter to obtain from the sea, seems to have been the half shekel due from every one to the Temple. Here the question is as to paying tribute to Cæsar or no. So that even if those at Jerusalem had known what He had done in His own city Capernaum with reference to the sacred tax, they might still doubt what His decision would be as to the lawfulness of paying this secular tribute.

The Pharisees who questioned Christ presupposed that service to Cæsar clashed with that to God. Christ shows, on the contrary, that the performance of what is due to one by no means takes away the obligation of rendering proper service to the other authority; that both, indeed, may be carried out at the same time.¹ Let us remember the whole force of our Blessed Lord's reply to this question. The Jews were living not only under a foreign and a heathen sovereign, but under Tiberius Cæsar, a cruel and dissolute prince. Yet we shall see that they were commanded to render him fitting homage and to pay him tribute. We, then, are bound to submit to, to honour, and to obey those rulers who are placed over us, however evil their lives may be.

Spenser.

¹ "There were two sorts of people in Jewry: one that had made an insurrection with Theudas against Cæsar about tribute; and his followers would acknowledge nothing due to Cæsar, *refractorii spiritus*, spirits of opposition. And, secondly, there were *spiritus aulici* too, Herodians, that would have Cæsar to have all, even the things that were God's; and these men came to Christ with the Scribes to tempt Him. *Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?* They would try which side Christ

seemed joined to: but He goes in a middle way; He condemns the seditious party that denied Cæsar his tribute, and yet joins not with the Herodians. He says not *Omnia sunt Cæsaris*, all things belong to Cæsar, but Cæsar hath his *quæ* and God hath His *quæ*; so He goes from Theudas, but not to the Herodians, but stays at obedience, which is *in medio*."—*Bishop Andrewes on the Ten Commandments*, Comman. v. chap. 8.

(18) *But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye Me, ye hypocrites?*

The sin of these men is pointed out in the words addressed by Christ to them. They were *hypocrites*, making a show of religious zeal but having no religion in their hearts, and pretending a scruple of conscience which they had not. They came not to learn, as they professed, but to *tempt* Him. They in doing this were tempting the Lord their God—*Why tempt ye Me?* *Why*, but to compass My death, and so to do that which is unlawful. Every word of this reproof of Christ has a special force.

Paulus de
Palacio.

These men came to our Blessed Lord professing that He was *true*, and that He taught *the way of God in truth*, and that they were desirous to hear of this *way* from His mouth. The only question, however, which they asked to be solved is one merely as to the payment of a civil due, not as to any part of that Gospel which He had come to declare. And the question is not asked from any desire to receive an answer, except for the purpose of entangling Him in His words. He saw their hearts and recognised the motive which had led them to Him, and showed that He was true, and *the Truth* itself—the Searcher of all thoughts, to whom all hearts are open.

Arias Mont.

John xiv. 6.
Sylveira.

To the soft and crafty speech of these men—to their salutation, *Master*—Christ answers roughly, *Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?*¹ He tears away the thin disguise which they hoped would have concealed the malignity of their hearts. He saw and convicted them of hypocrisy; and since, according to their confession, He cared for no man—feared, that is, no man—He calls them by this name, *hypocrites*. Thus, when at another time they came with similar words, and with the like evil heart—*Master, we would see a sign from Thee*—He answers in like manner to His present reply: *An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign.* On the other hand, when His enemies came about Him with words of hatred and reproach, we find Him answering with mildness and with gentle reproof.² Thus does He show the greatness of the sin of hypocrisy, and the way in which God regards the conscious untruth which is evidenced in

Matt. xii. 38,
39.

¹ “Nummis falsis similia sunt adulatorum ficta verba; quibus favorem, benevolentiam, et munera aliqua, emere conantur. Imaginem et inscriptionem veritatis pecuniæ insculpunt falsæ: veritatis est imago, sed mendacii metallum.” —Barradius.

² “La fidélité qu'un ecclésiastique doit à son ministère bannit toute crainte humaine; mais elle s'accommode fort bien avec la sagesse chrétienne, qui n'est ni téméraire ni étourdie.” —Quesnel.

professions of holiness and of discipleship, whilst the heart is given over to the service of Satan and to the pursuit of earthly lusts. At the same time, we see that He is neither moved by fair speeches to disregard the state of man's heart, nor by words of hatred and deeds of evil to fail in His love and mercy towards the sinner.

Tostatus

In answering thus sharply to the evil intents of these men, and not to the blandness of their words, our Great Teacher reminds us that God can answer a man according to his thoughts and to the intents and wishes of his heart, and not to those prayers which are of the lips only.

Rab. Maurus.

(19) *Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto Him a penny. (20) And He saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?*

Christ did not produce this coin from the bag which Judas bore, but He called upon them to *shew* it. He would point out to them that they acknowledged by their own deeds, by their own confession, as shown in the use of the coins of Cæsar, that the nation was under the Roman rule, and themselves were the subjects of Cæsar. Thus He asks the question, *Whose is this image and superscription?* whose effigy and name is inscribed on this coin? not as though He knew not, but, as was His wont, especially when captious questions were put to Him, that they might answer the question out of their own mouths.¹

Tostatus.
Jans. Gand.Jerome.
Alex. Nat.Matt. xvii.
23.
Rom. xiii. 7.

(21) *They say unto Him, Cæsar's. Then saith He unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*

In this He answers both parties who had come to entangle Him in His words. Ye Pharisees, render to Cæsar his due; ye Herodians, render to God that which is His due.

Wesley.

¹ "They endeavour by a pernicious subtilty to find out whether Christ were of the same opinion with Judas of Galilee. Which opinion those lewd disturbers of all things, whom Josephus brands everywhere under the name of *zealots*, had taken up; stiffly denying obedience and tribute to a Roman prince, because they persuaded themselves and their followers that it was a

sin to submit to a heathen government. What great calamities the outrageous fury of this conceit brought upon the people both Josephus and the ruins of Jerusalem at this time testify. They chose Cæsar before Christ; and yet because they would neither have Cæsar nor Christ, they remain sad monuments to all ages of the Divine vengeance and their own madness."—*Lightfoot*.

Our Blessed Lord had been asked by these men whether it were lawful to *give* to Cæsar. He answers, in reply to their question, I say not *give*; it is not yours to *give*; but I bid you *render*, to give back that which is not yours, but another's. Again, in His answer there is nothing about man's duty to render *tribute*. Christ rises from the special question and lays down a general law for all men. He bids men not only to pay *tribute*; their duty is not fulfilled when that is rigidly performed; but He bids them *render* whatever is due to Cæsar—all *things* which belong to their earthly sovereign.¹

Isid. Clarius.

Tostatus.

The things which are Cæsar's are these—

(1) Honour. For we must regard earthly rulers as the ministers of God and the shepherds of the people; as those set over us, in order *that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd*; as those placed for the defence of their subjects; as the *shields* of God's people.

Rom. xiii. 4.

Num. xxvii.
17.
Ps. xlvii. 9.

(2) Obedience. For the command reaches to all people, *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him.*

1 Pet. ii. 13,
14.

(3) Tribute. For the command is equally stringent: *Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

Boys.

Rom. xiii. 7.

But our Blessed Lord is not content with replying to the words of the question asked by these men. His answer is devoted to what is passing in their mind. And just as when the lawyer asked Him for the one *great commandment of the law*, and Christ added the second, which was required to make the first complete; so He is now not content with bidding them *render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's*, but He adds the command that they should at the same time *render unto God the things that are God's*.

Matt. xxii.
36.

As, then, *tribute* is to be rendered because the very coin bore the *image and superscription* of Cæsar, therefore we are bidden here to render to God—

(1) Our whole selves—body, soul, and spirit—because we are His *image*.² For at the first we were made *in the image*

Tertullian,
De Idol. xv.

¹ "Les princes étant plus que les autres hommes les images de Dieu, doivent aussi rendre à Dieu tout ce qu'ils recoivent des hommes, en le rapportant à sa gloire."—*Quesnel*.

² "Sicut Cæsar exigit à vobis impressionem imaginis suæ—id est, denarium—ita et Deus omnipotens exigit à

vobis impressionem imaginis Sux—id est, animam—ut quemadmodum redditur Cæsari nummus, ita et Deo reddatur anima lumine vultus Ejus illustrata. De quo lumine dicimus: *Signatum est super nos lumen vultus Tui, Domine* [Psalm iv. 6]."—*Haymo*.

Gen. i. 27.

Gen. ix. 6.

Acts xvii. 29.

James iii. 9.

Stier.

of God; and though by our sins we have marred this image and rendered it foul with earthly lusts, yet we have never lost that image: even though its beauty is no longer seen, it is still there, and we yet bear about with us the traces of God's workmanship in our souls and bodies. Since therefore He made us in His image at the first, we still bear about His image.

Jerome.

Augustine,
Serm. xc.

Hilary.

Matt. Faber.¹Bonaven-
tura.

Ludov.

Granat.

Gen. i. 27.

1 Cor. xv. 49.

Estius.

(2) With ourselves we are also to *render unto God all the things that are God's*; all tithes and offerings, which are His right, and which He looks for from us, since in this we are but His stewards.

Christ's coin is man; in him is Christ's image, Christ's name, Christ's gifts, Christ's rules of duty.¹ Whilst, then, Cæsar looks for gold and silver and the rendering of earthly riches, God seeks from thee the surrender of thyself, body, soul, and will, which is His image. The remembrance of this, that we were made in the very image of God, will be a safeguard against yielding to temptation; the consideration of the dignity of our nature will strengthen us against doing anything unworthy of that image which we bear. God looks to us to show forth the greatness of that image by the holiness of our lives, as clearly as the coin makes known the image of the sovereign. For what cause, indeed, has He made us like Himself? What hope have we that we may share hereafter eternal glory with Him, save that now we are like Him in our lives? like Him in holiness, in mercifulness, in meekness. And this image of God in man is threefold—

(1) The body of man was made in the image of the Incarnate Son: after the model of the One perfect man. For we who are hereafter to *bear the image of the heavenly* now already bear *the image of the earthly*.

(2) In the soul, which reflects the light of Deity, and which is made up of the three faculties of intellect or reason, of memory, and of will—a shadow, so to say, of the

¹ "If we now conform ourselves according to Christ's image, He shall hereafter (as it is in this day's Epistle) *transform our vile body, that it may be like His glorious body*; for as we have borne the image of the earthly, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. Take heed, therefore, that Satan imprint not his stamp on you, because Christ at the last day will say to thy soul, as He did to the Pharisees here: *Whose is this image and superscription?* If thou be branded with the marks of

Satan and Antichrist, hell is thy portion; if thou be sealed by the Holy Spirit of God unto the day of redemption, heaven is thine inheritance. Give, then, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; leave to the world the things of the world; that thou mayest the better give to God the things of God. Or give to thy body such things as are necessary tribute, and to thy soule such things as are convenient and profitable for thy soule."—*Dean Boys*.

ever-blessed Trinity. *For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*¹ Rom. i. 20.

(3) In the rule which God has given to man, His representative, over the lower orders of creation—the *dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* Royard. Gen. i. 28.

In joining together these two things—the rendering what is due to Cæsar and what is due to God—our Blessed Lord teaches us that there is no natural opposition between God and Cæsar, any more than there is any necessary opposition between God and our neighbour on earth. He who obeys cheerfully the laws of Cæsar, obeys God Himself in so doing. All things in the world, indeed—earthly possession, and earthly riches, and earthly power—are God's. The Maker and Ruler of all things, however, rules by the delegated authority of man, and He it is who sets kings in authority; *for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Obedience, therefore, to sovereigns in earthly things is due to them as the representatives and vicegerents of God Himself. The soul, however, is due alone to God. Earthly homage and earthly riches, earthly things to the earthly sovereign—to Cæsar. The soul, and with the soul ourselves and all that we possess, is to be rendered to our Father in heaven. Rom. xiii. 1. Luca Brug.

By these words of our Blessed Lord those men are reprovèd who separate the things of God, and who act as though one part of His gifts were good and another part evil. The goods of the body are necessary to us as well as those of the soul. They who despise the things of the body, and who affect to regard only spiritual things, are like those Pharisees who forbade men to pay tribute to the civil governor and to render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's. Such are they also who, under an affectation of spiritual advantage, forbid men *to marry, and command to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received*

¹ “Ut ait Augustinus in xiv. libro de Trinitate, Licet humana mens non sit ejus naturæ cujus Deus est; imago tamen illius, quo nihil melius est, ibi quærenda et invenienda est, quo natura nostra nil habet melius—id est, in mente. In ipsa etiam mente, antequam sit particeps Dei, Ejus imago reperitur: etsi enim anima Dei participatione deformis sit, imago Dei tamen permanet. Ea enim ipsa imago Dei est mens, quo capax Ejus est, Ejusque

particeps esse potest. Jam ergo in ea trinitate quæ Deus est inquiremus. Ecce enim mens meminit sui, intelligit se, diligit se: hoc si cernimus, cernimus trinitatem; nondum quidem Deum, sed imaginem Dei. Hic enim quædam apparet trinitas memoriæ, intelligentiæ, et amoris. Hæc ergo tria potissimum tractemus, memoriam, intelligentiam, voluntatem.”—P. Lombard in *Sentent.* lib. 1, Dist. iii. c. 8.

1 Tim. iv. 8. *with thanksgiving by them which believe and know the truth.* Those, on the other hand, who pamper the body and give loose to sensual indulgence to the neglect and destruction of the soul, deny to God those things which are His, and resemble the Herodians who joined with the Pharisees in tempting Christ.

Origen.

And the fact that we bear the image of God teaches us these practical lessons—

(1) If we are made in His image, we are His children; bound, therefore, to show to Him that love which children owe to their parent.

(2) The image which He has given to us is so great a privilege, that we owe Him all gratitude.

(3) We are bound to treat the image of God, ourselves, with all reverence, because it is His image; not to degrade our body, which is His, and our soul, which should serve Him, by plunging ourselves in the mire of sinful lusts, and by bringing our nature into subjection to Satan, the enemy both of God and man.¹

Peraldus.

Stier.

Let us be careful to make known the *image* which we bear by the *superscription* of our lives; and show to the world that we have both the likeness of God stamped upon us by nature, and the cross of Christ signed upon us in our baptism.²

(22) *When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left Him, and went their way.*

They marvelled at the greatness of His wisdom, which had defeated their counsel and their attempt to ensnare Him in His words: *they marvelled* at His insight into their hearts, and at His knowledge that it was in hypocrisy they had come to Him. They came to take Him in His words, and remained to marvel at His wisdom. They thought to catch Him, and they were themselves caught in their own craftiness. And yet they *went their way*, wondering, indeed, at His power, but with their unbelief of heart not removed.³

Toetatus.

Scarez.

Jerome.

Chrysostom.

They marvelled, but were neither convinced of their wickedness in attempting to *entangle Him in His talk*, nor converted from their unbelief that He was the Messiah. What He

¹ “Pontifex Judæorum in lamina aurea ad frontem nomen Dei *Jehova* scriptum gerebat [Exod. xxviii. 36]; indicio eum, tantum quantum, Deo esse consecratum. Homo, quasi pontifex orbis Dei, non solum nomen sed imaginem essentiae divinae præfert in fronte animæ; argumento signatum ac debi-

tum Deo esse totum oportere.”—*Copenstein*.

² “Nobilem vult esse vitam tuam, qui tibi commisit imaginem suam.”—*Euseb. Nyss. Hom. ii.*

³ “Infidelitatem cum miraculo pariter reportantes.”—*Jerome*.

had bidden them do they wholly refused to perform. But though they would not render to Cæsar that civil obedience which they were bound by God's law to render, and which Christ commanded, they did more than this: they gave up to Cæsar the Messiah, the Anointed of God, lest *the Romans should come and take away both their place and nation*; whilst to God they refused to render that obedience of heart and will which was required of them.

John x. 48.
Williams in
Holy Week.

They marvelled, and left Him, and went their way. Thus it proves with many in our own day when hearing Christ in the ministry of His word: they are content to admire the sermon, and to applaud the wisdom or the intellect of the preacher, and then go *their way* barren of all true repentance for sin and as full of wickedness as before. Mayer.

••• “Domine Jesu Christe, doce me astutias seductorum intelligere et cavere, necnon veritatem vitæ ac doctrinæ et justitiæ semper custodire. Da mihi insigniri Tua imagine, non inimici, ut ea quæ mundi sunt relinquendo, et Tibi soli adhærendo, reddam Tibi ea quæ de Tua gratia à Te percepi, in

ipsis Tibi fideliter serviendo. Præsta etiam mihi ut carnalem et mundanam conversationem, quæ sterilis est, fugere, ac spiritualem et cœlestem sectari valeam, et, gloria resurrectionis invocatus, cum angelis Deo in cœlo immortalitate frui merear et perpetua Tui visione. Amen.”—*Ludolph.*

THE TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. MATTHEW IX. 18—26.

Mark v. 22,
23.
Luke viii. 41,
42.

(18) *While He spake¹ these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped Him, saying, My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay Thy hand upon her, and she shall live.*

IN this day's Gospel we have two miracles recorded, connected not merely by the time in which Christ wrought them, but also by their bearing upon each other: for the faith of the ruler of the synagogue,² at the moment when it was most sorely tried, was strengthened by the sight of the miracle wrought upon the poor woman who, unseen, had drawn near to our Blessed Lord. The two miracles, moreover, were an answer to the doubts of those who wished for proof of the truth of Christ's claim to be the Messiah. Hence it is we are expressly told that the ruler came with his importunate entreaties that the Saviour would come and heal his daughter whilst Jesus was speaking to the disciples of John, and to those of the Pharisees. He thus answered the doubts of the first, whether He were indeed the Messiah—*He that should come*—by working these two miracles; and by the same act rebuked the malice of the Pharisees, whilst he showed the untruth of their reviling,

Matt. xi. 3.

¹ "*Hæc eo loquente, significatur ordo historiæ: sed in Marco et Luca refertur ad ordinem memoriæ suæ.*"—*Th. Aquinas.*

² In every city of Judæa there were synagogues or places of assembly for public religious worship; "houses dedicated to the worship of God, wherein it was lawful to pray, preach, and dispute, but not to sacrifice. In Hebrew the synagogue was called

בֵּית הַכְּנֻסָּה, Beth Hachneseth, the house of assembly. The Temple at Jerusalem was the cathedral church; the synagogues as petty parish churches belonging thereunto."—*Th. Godwyn's Moses and Aaron*, book ii. chap. 2. "Ut tenderent ad verum cultum spirituales, Deus voluit esse plura loca orationis, vel doctrinæ, et unum tantum sacrificiorum."—*Salmeron.*

Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? Tostatus. John vii. 48.
 by manifesting and perfecting the faith of this ruler. And not for these men only did Christ do this. The miracles of our Blessed Lord, though acts of mercy towards certain sick persons, or deeds by which the faith of those who were then in His presence was strengthened, yet were done for us also, and are recorded in Holy Scripture *for our learning*. In Rom. xv. 4. them we are taught these three truths—

(1) That He who wrought these mighty works, which were beyond the power of any man to do by his own strength, was Christ the Messiah.

(2) In them we have a proof of the power which is in His hands. We see that Christ is Almighty, able to control and direct all things, and to comfort all men in their distress, and that His touch has in it a life-giving power to heal all infirmity, and even to raise the dead. Hofmeister. Guillaud.

(3) In these miracles we may learn truths which concern our own souls, for they are as full of doctrines as the parables which, by His mouth, He taught the people. Hofmeister.

St. Mark and St. Luke, who have recorded these two miracles at greater length than St. Matthew, tell us that this man was *one of the rulers of the synagogue*, and that his name was Jairus; ¹ and St. Luke adds, that the daughter for whose healing he was importunate was his *only daughter*. By giving the name of this *certain ruler*, who, as the chief man in the synagogue at Capernaum, was well known to all the people of Galilee, the latter Evangelists enabled any who might doubt the truth of the miracle to ascertain the fact from the lips of the father himself. By comparing St. Matthew's account of the miracle with the fuller narrative of St. Mark and St. Luke, it is evident that the *ruler* came to Christ when his daughter, indeed, was *at the point of death*—when she was evidently *a-dying*, but before she was really dead.² His faith in Christ's power only extended to a belief that He could heal where no other could; not that He was able to raise the dead, of which the life of our Blessed Lord had hitherto afforded no instance.³ Whilst, however, the Mark v. 22. Luke viii. 41, 42. Titus Bost. Mark v. 22. Luke viii. 42.

¹ "*Jairus* significat illuminantem יָאִיר, ab יָאִר lumine: et fuit alias nomen inter Judæos non inusitatum, ut Deut. iii. 14; Num. xxxii. 41; Josh. xiii. 30; Jud. x. 3; ubi est nomen judicis, 1 Reg. iv. 13, Græci nomini Hebræo [יָאִיר] adjecerunt suam terminationem *ος*, ut, pro 'Ιαίρις 'Ιαίριος dicatur. Dubium autem non est, hoc satis illustre nomen huic archisynagogo spiritus

et animum addidisse,"—*Chemnitz*.

² "Augustinus inquit, quia quando iste Jairus recessit, jam erat in extremis et credebat quod eam non inveniret vivam: ideo magis petebat ut veniret et resuscitaret eam, quam ut curaret."—*Th. Aquinas*.

³ "Credibile est eum principio dixisse quodd in extremis esset, seu ageret animam, ac mox tanquam corrigens quod

Mark v. 35.
Luke viii. 49.

Chrysostom.

Bengel.
Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Mark v. 22.

Dion. Carth.

Ph. Diez.

Saviour was on the way, accompanied by the ruler, and followed by the wondering crowd, messengers from the house announced to the father that his daughter was dead, and that it was therefore useless any more to trouble the Master. These words, then, *My daughter is even now dead*, are either the natural language of excessive and exaggerating grief, the despairing cry of a father who had left his daughter at the last gasp, and who judged that by the time he had reached our Blessed Lord she was really dead; or, as others have supposed, St. Matthew, passing over the first entreaty, has only recorded the words spoken by the ruler when the messenger had come from his house and informed him of his daughter's death.¹

He worshipped Him—thus acknowledging the power of the Redeemer to heal; for outwardly Jairus was of a rank superior to Christ. This act of humility and reverence, for St. Mark tells us he *fell at His feet*, was a recognition of the Divine power dwelling in the person of Christ, since nothing short of this could heal one who was at the point of death. It would seem, however, by the words which Jairus addressed to the Saviour, that he did not see in Him any marks by which he recognised Him to be more than a prophet possessing a certain definite and limited power given to Him from on high; though so great a power that openly, in the presence of the multitude, he worshipped Christ and showed Him such reverence as was given to kings and emperors. Hence the request that He would *come* to his house, and the prayer that He would lay His hand on his sick child, as though Christ were unable without this to

dixerat ad amplificandam rei necessitatem, imò jam mortua est.”—*Bredembach*.

¹ “Matthew, according to his usual custom, condenses his narrative, and relates miracles according to their final aspect. Compare the case of the Gadarene and Gergasene demoniacs. So, in the history of the centurion of Capernaum, St. Luke relates that the centurion sent messengers to Jesus to entreat His aid; afterwards, it would seem, when he received the Lord's answer, ‘I will come to heal the servant,’ the centurion went in person. Matthew omits all mention of the messengers, and records only the personal application of the centurion. The raising of Jairus's daughter is another case in point; St. Matthew

represents the ruler of the synagogue as telling Jesus at the first that his daughter was already dead, whereas it is certain, from the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, that the tidings of her death were brought to the father as Jesus was on His way to heal her.” “Marcus habet, *in extremis est*; Lucas, *et hæc moriebatur*. Porro Matthæus, qui studio brevitatis omittit id quod Marcus et Lucas narrant,—accuratiores enim sunt Marcus et Lucas in historiis recensendis; Matthæus in verbis Domini—jam proficiscentibus Jesu et archisynagogo, nunciatam fuisse archisynagogo filiæ mortem, et cætera quæ hinc sequuntur, in ipso exordio ponit quod in progressu factum est.”—*Luca Brugensis*. See Maldonatus and Jansenius Gandavensis on this passage.

effect a cure. Had he *worshipped* our Blessed Lord as Incarnate God, he, like the centurion, would have been ready to say, *I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my daughter shall be healed.* Chrysostom.
 Matt. viii. 8.
 Luke vii. 6, 7.

How dire the strait of this ruler was, or how great his faith, is shown in the hindrances which he put aside in thus making an acknowledgment of Christ's power. *Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?* was the taunt directed against our Blessed Lord's mission. The confession which this ruler made, that Christ possessed superhuman power, was especially dangerous to him, since *the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that He was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.* All this was forgotten or unheeded in the ruler's love for his only daughter, and in his despair of finding any other means for her recovery.¹ Such are the uses of affliction; for as the curb checks the steed which has bounded away from the right road, so does trouble oftentimes compel the soul of man to yield obedience to the things which are for its good, and directs it into the way which God has marked out for it.² John vii. 48.
 John ix. 22.
 Cyril.

In the narratives of the four Evangelists we have recorded three instances of our Lord's power in raising the dead to life; and in these there is a certain progression to be noted. The raising of the ruler's daughter is the first miracle of the kind which Christ did, and this young girl was raised shortly after death, whilst the body was still in the house. The widow's son was recalled to life whilst the corpse was being carried forth from the city to the sepulchre. Lazarus was raised to life again after he had been four days dead and was already in the tomb. Here we have successively types of sinners recalled from the death of sin and restored to a life of holiness. In the first we have an image of the sinner whose sins have been in secret, and have not been evidenced by acts of wickedness and the pollution of others. In the second we have a picture of the sinner who has gone beyond this, who has become an open offender, known as such even in *the gate of the city.* In Lazarus we have an example of Luke vii. 12.

¹ "Afflictio et labor hunc principem commoverunt ut ad Dominum tanta reverentia accederet. Unde infertur nos quoties cunque à Domino laboribus opprimimur, ei ob id gratias agere debere, siquidem nos incitant ut ad ipsum confugiamus."—*Ph. Diez.*

² "Our extremities drive us to our Saviour; His love draws Him to be

most present and helpful to our extremities. When we are forsaken of all succours and hopes, we are fittest for His redress. Never are we nearer to help than when we despair of help. There is no fear, no danger, but in our own insensibleness."—*Bishop Hall's Contemplations.*

John xl. 44.

the sinner whose acts of sin have grown up into confirmed habits; one who has become a source of corruption to others, and who is *bound hand and foot with the graveclothes* of his sins, and has become the unresisting, if not the willing, slave of Satan. And these are not only so many types of the various classes of sinners, but our Blessed Lord is recorded to have raised them from the dead in the order pointed out, proceeding from the less to the greater, as if to show us that it is comparatively easy to arrest the young sinner, more difficult to arouse and recall the open and notorious offender, and still more so to bring back again the old and habitual sinner to a life of holiness.¹

Costar.

The ruler came to seek Christ's aid, because Christ had first come to him. It was the presence of Christ in Capernaum, and the knowledge of His deeds of mercy and power, which drew this man, in his deep sorrow, and the powerlessness of all human means, to the feet of Christ.² It is His presence which stirs the heart of the penitent man; and when the sinner turns to Christ, it is a proof that Christ is not only calling him, but that He is very near to the sinner. But whilst we derive this lesson of comfort and encouragement from the narrative before us, let us remember what we may equally gather from this part of the Gospel. Now was the prophecy of Malachi fulfilled, *Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings*. He who was the Sun of Righteousness had come into the world, and to those who, like this ruler, with reverential fear came to Him, He showed Himself the great Healer. Whilst, however, He offers mercy and strength and healing freely to us all, we have the power of resisting His call, of being as indifferent to His Divine mission as the multitude who thronged Him, and of rejecting Him from ruling over us, as the Pharisees who derided Him.

Mal. iv. 2.

Coppetstein.

Stella.

In three ways does Christ speak to His people, and we have them all here—

Prov. i. 20.

(1) He speaks by the living words proceeding either from His own mouth or from that of His ministers; of such a call the wise man speaks, *Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets*.

Ps. xxxiv. 8.

(2) Christ speaks to us by His recognised mercies, by the blessings of prosperity, and by the withdrawal of suffering, as when He bids us *taste and see that the Lord is good*.

¹ See the Commentary on the Gospel for the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity, at the 15th verse. (Vol. II. pp. 581—583.)

² "Vidit ex qua domo exivit, scilicet publicani, et ideo sperat; audivit quod etiam mulieres curat."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

(3) He calls us, again, by the sufferings, the affliction, and the adversity which He lays upon us, by which means the thoughtless and sinners are drawn to Him as to the fountain of healing and of love. Coster.

In all these ways did He speak and proclaim Himself a *gracious and merciful God*, both to the poor woman in her sordid poverty and shame, and to the ruler in his deep sorrow. 2 Chron. xxx.
9.
Jonah iv. 2.

(19) *And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did His disciples.*

He *followed* the ruler; for He Himself also was a man. He had really taken upon Him our humanity, and had become like us in all things except sin. He was ready at all times to enter the houses of those who needed His aid: and so ought His ministers to be ready at all times to imitate their Master's example—to visit the sick, to aid the needy,¹ to comfort the broken-hearted and penitent in their sorrows; to visit the members of the flock, not for the personal advantage of the pastor, but for the good of those intrusted to his care. Jerome.

We have here two examples for our imitation. On the one hand, our Blessed Lord, man's great exemplar; on the other, the ruler of the synagogue. Jairus is a pattern to us—

(1) In his humility: by his falling at the feet of Jesus he acknowledged the vast distance between himself and Christ. *He worshipped Him.*

(2) In the earnestness of his prayers, the constancy of his entreaties to Christ that He would come and heal his daughter.

(3) In his confidence in the power of Christ to do that for which he prayed.² Stella.

But Christ also is an example to us all, more especially to those who are the ministers of His flock. He is in various ways an example—

(1) In His love for man, which moved Him to follow this man in order that He might grant that which he needed. Remigius.

¹ "Expende quemodo Christus dimittens prædicationem (nam, ut Matthæus ait, ad populum loquebatur) secutus est Jairum. Quo facto docemur aliquando dimittendam esse orationem, prædicationem, et vitam contemplativam, ut proximis periclitantibus aut afflictis subveniamus."—*Stella.*

² "Archisynagogus hic habuit humilitatem, quia reverenter petiit; habuit affectum, quia ardentem oravit; habuit fiduciam, quia ad Christum venire non dubitavit: et sic his tribus rebus nixus optimo jure petivit. . . . Oratio humiliantis se cælos penetrat."—*Stella.*

Coster.

(2) In His humility: for if He who was Incarnate God condescended to follow this man, how much more ought we to stoop to aid those who are our fellow-creatures, and equal to us by the possession of a common nature?

(3) In His readiness to do good; in His rising up immediately, that He might grant the ruler's prayer.

Ferus.

From the example of their Divine Master let the ministers of His Church lay to heart these lessons: that they are called not only to rule, but also to serve, the flock; not only to guide and direct, but in every way to aid all those who need their assistance; and that they are to do so with a ready and willing mind.

Quesnel.

When the minister of God's Church calls his Master to his aid, and prays for the soul of any of the flock to whom he is as a father, let him be assured that Christ will listen to his prayer, and that He will rise up and follow for that soul's healing.

Mark v. 25.
Luke viii. 43.

(20) *And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind Him, and touched the hem of His garment.*¹

Coster.

Behold. This word, twice repeated, points to the untiring nature of our Lord's love, and the active mercy of His ministry. *Behold*, whilst speaking to John's disciples, He was called upon to heal the daughter of the ruler. *Behold*, whilst on His way thither to raise the dead, He paused for a moment to heal this woman of her infirmity.

Ludolph.

She *came behind* our Blessed Lord, not merely because unable to approach Him on account of the crowd, but—

(1) In shame, because of the nature of her disease, and the defilement which was the consequence.

¹ "That which we read *hem* in the Gospel is called Num. xv. 38 ציצית Tsitsith, fringes, and גדילים, Gedelim, Deut. xxii. 12, which word we likewise translate in that place fringes. They were in the forequoted places commanded, and our Saviour Christ Himself did wear them. The reason of this command was to put them in mind of the Commandments, Num. xv.; and for the furtherance of this duty the Pharisees used sharp thorns in their fringes, that by the often pricking of the thorns, whether they walked or sat still, they might be the more mindful of the Commandments (Talmud, tract. Suta, cap. iii.)."—*Godwyn*.

"Superstitiosi magistri captantes auram popularem, atque ex mulierculis sectantes lucra, faciebant grandes fimbrias et acutissimas in eis spinas ligabant: ut videlicet ambulantes et sedentes interdum pungerentur, et quasi hac admonitione retraherentur ad officia domini, et ministeria servitutis ejus."—*Hieronymus* in Matt. xxiii. 5. See also Tostatus in loco, and Remigius, who finely observes, "The Pharisees wore hems made large, in some of which they inserted thorns. But the hem of Christ's garment was not intended to wound, but to heal, and hence the woman laid hold of it."

Lev. xv. 25.
To-tus.
Cyril.

Remigius.
Mark v 26.
Luke viii. 48.

Spence.

Mark v. 34.

Gal. vi. 9.

domus suæ, ad cujus fimbriam cum quædam inusitata herba, quæ prope nata est, attigisset morbi cujuscumque medicandi vim accepit. Quæ omnia à se visa testatur Eusebius Cæsariensis, lib. xvii. Hist. cap. 14; et idem referunt Theophylactus hic et Sozomenus, Hist. Tripart. lib. vi. c. 15. Martha autem hoc facere non poterat quia ex Judæis erat, quibus non licebat simulacrum cujusvis quavis occasione formare.”—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione.*

Stella.

love is to be no excuse for neglecting other claims upon our charity. One Christian duty does not hinder another.

The greatness of the miracle wrought by our Blessed Lord is shown, then, in two particulars—

Mark v. 42.
Th. Aquinas.

(1) Her disease was of long standing; she had been *twelve years* thus afflicted, having suffered as many years as the ruler's daughter had lived, for St. Mark tells us that the maiden *was of the age of twelve years*. Here we have an image of the sinner confirmed in his opposition to God by long habits of sin. We see the picture of one who has gone on from the delight which the anticipation of sin brings with it to consenting in the sin itself; and from the consent of the will to active deeds of impurity; and from working wickedness to the formation of habits of sin; and from habits of sin to abiding so long in them that evil has become, as it were, natural to the sinner; and from this to desperation and to hopelessness of amendment. Here, also, with this image, we have the comforting promise that Christ is ready to remove sins, however inveterate they may have become, as He cured the long-standing and aggravated disease of this poor woman.

Voragine.

Hall.

Stella.

Mark v. 26.

(2) We may see the greatness of the miracle also in the failure of all attempts to heal the disease. Under all her many physicians, as St. Mark tells us, she grew not better, but *worse*.¹ Let us remember that false means for the healing of the soul will not aid in its cure, but will rather rob us of what little strength we still have; will aggravate the evil, and cause us to grow *worse* in the sight of God. Thus it is that the sinner is oftentimes not benefited by the efforts which he makes to obtain peace and to recover his lost purity, but is deprived of what he still has. Only in the way which God has appointed, only by the hand of the great Physician, can the soul be healed of its sins and restored in any measure to its old innocence.

Gros.

Remigius.

And this fact of the long continuance of her disease and the failure of every attempt at healing shows us also the greatness of her faith, since, notwithstanding her frequent disappointments and the aggravation of her disease by every effort which she had made to obtain a cure, she yet had this firm belief in our Blessed Lord's power to heal. It may be that her faith was awakened by seeing Jairus leading the Saviour to his house in order that He might

¹ "Pulchrè notat D. Bonaventura Lucam hoc prætermissee; quia, cùm medicus foret, noluit de medicis narrare quod ipsos dedecorare posset.

Lucas medicus hoc tacet, de medicis curialiùs loquens." — *Emmanuale ab Incarnatione*.

raise his daughter from death. But when aroused it would seem to have been mightier than his; and her example and the miracle wrought in answer to her faith were made use of by Christ in order to strengthen the feebler faith of Jairus, and to show him that He who, by the mere touch of His garment, could heal the disease of *twelve years'* standing, had power also to raise her who, after living *twelve years*, was now dead. Cyril.
Tostatus.
Hall.

Though all others might be defiled by the touch of her who was unclean, yet Christ, who came to heal all uncleanness and to forgive all sins, could not be defiled by contact with impurity of any kind soever. He who was surrounded by sinners, and tempted by Satan to sin, was yet unstained by evil and remained His life through without sin. Ward.

(21) *For she said within herself, If I may but touch His garment, I shall be whole.* Zech. viii. 23.

She said within herself, uttering no word of prayer, but praying in every action which she did; for the burning desire of healing and the acknowledgment of Christ's power to heal were a very real prayer. *She said within herself*—for in vain coming into the presence of Christ, in vain all means of grace, unless we speak from *within* the soul¹—*If I may but touch*—the weakest of all actions—the *hem of His garment*, the remotest part of her Lord; if she could do this with a trembling hand, a feeble apprehension, yet she felt by this she would be made whole.² We have in these words pointed out to us— Paulus de Palacio.
Leigh.

(1) Her strong faith; which made her confident that, by merely touching the hem of His garment, she should be made whole.

(2) Her humility; which led her, without making any request in words, to come behind Him: the consciousness of her unworthiness and of her impurity hindering her from presenting herself before Him.³

(3) Her active love. She was not content to believe in

¹ “Frustra contendes, nisi dicat intra te. Quid prodest ad sacrificia conciones et confessiones venire nisi dicas intra te? Ut enim Deus est Spiritus et non caro; ita spiritus vivificat, caro sine spiritu, non prodest quicquam.”—*Paulus de Palacio*.

² “She made a mistake in attributing the miracles of Christ to some natural power independent of His will, but was right in expecting all power

from Him whom God had anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power all over, as the high priest was anointed with oil.”—*Keble*.

³ “Tout est sanctifiant dans l'Église, jusqu'aux exercices les plus petits et les plus bas; et ils sont souvent d'autant plus capables de nous procurer la guérison, qu'ils sont plus propres à nous entretenir dans une disposition d'humilité.”—*Nicolas sur les Évangiles*.

Him; she must touch Him: and then, though not from her faith, yet because of her faith, virtue came from His blessed body for her healing.

Avendaño.

Eusebius
Emile.
Haymo.

This garment of Christ, by the touch of which all who come to Him in faith are healed, is the human nature of our Lord, the flesh of man with which at His incarnation He covered the glories of Deity. The very hem of this, the least suffering which He endured for us, is able to heal all those who come to Him, as the woman came, strong in confidence in His power and love, humbly distrusting our own strength and conscious of the unworthiness of our lives, and yet resolute to struggle against the crowd of all those things which hinder our approach to Christ, and only anxious to reach forward to and touch Him.¹ It is not enough for any of us that we believe, that we know that Christ's words are true and that Christ's power can save us from the dominion of our sins. Living faith, such as this woman displayed, is no mere belief, however strong. It is extinguished, it utterly perishes, unless it goes forth in deeds of love and obedience. For ever might this poor woman have remained in her disease, even with her knowledge, her confidence, that Christ could heal her, unless she had overcome all obstacles, had drawn near to, and had touched, Christ.²

Ferus.

Coster.

Luke vii. 50;
viii. 48;
xvii. 10;
xviii. 42.

(22) *But Jesus turned Him about, and when He saw her, He said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.*

Mark v. 30.

Jans. Gand.

Maldonatus.

We read in St. Mark that our Blessed Lord asked, *Who touched my clothes?* Speaking not of a bare material touch—for the crowd pressed around Him—but of that touch of faith which alone He recognised. He knew, indeed, who the penitent was; but as He often did with reference to the sick and the sinful, so now He will have from her an acknowledgment of her need, a confession of her condition. Christ would not have her go away in secret, for many reasons—

(1) He would remove from her mind the fear that she had done wrong, and had, as it were, stolen from Him the

¹ "The least part of Christ, the least touch of faith, omnipotency can work by the smallest means."—*Bp. Brownrigg, 3rd Sermon on Christmas.*

"Christus vestis devotione, fiducia, religione, tangendi erit, si salvus esse velis. Quæ est vestis Christi? Ea

nimirum, qua sacratissimum corpus Christi tegitur."—*Lud. Granatensis.*

² "Credidit, dixit, tetigit. In his tribus speciebus sanitas omnis promeretur—id est, in fide, verbo, et opere."—*Rab. Maurus.*

blessing. Hence His words of encouragement, *Daughter, be of good comfort*; for with this word *Daughter* He relieves her fear and gives to her faith increased strength, as He gave to her *power to become the child of God* through her belief in His name.

John i. 12.
Jerome.

(2) He would correct her error in supposing that she could be hidden from Him.

(3) He would bestow on her the spiritual blessing of *peace* and forgiveness as a reward for her faith.

(4) He would set forth her faith, and make it illustrious, that all might imitate it.

(5) He would show forth His power to the strengthening of other sick persons, and manifest that He could not only cure all diseases, but that He knew all things.

Chrysostom.

(6) He would confirm the faith of Jairus, shaken at the tidings of his daughter's death.¹

Tostatus.

And when *His disciples said unto Him, Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched me?* He still looked for the poor woman, saying, *Somebody hath touched Me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me.* He says not merely, *Virtue is gone out of Me*, but I know that it is so; *I perceive it*. It was with His knowledge, and therefore His will, that the healing mercy was given to this woman.

Mark v. 31.

Luke viii. 46.

Tostatus.

Virtue is gone out of Me. It was the Divine power which worked her cure, not the body of Christ, except as united to and penetrated with Divinity, for this of itself was human and did not cure; not the garment of Christ, for this is but the instrument by which He works it; it was the incommunicable power of the Godhead which healed her. We read, indeed, of no miracle wrought by our Blessed Lord in which the humanity of Jesus Christ had not a part. He spake with a human voice, and the dead obeyed His call and came from the grave. He touched with the hand of His human body, and the leper was immediately made whole; He anointed the eyes of the blind, and when His finger touched them they at once saw. But though this was so, in every miracle it was the Divine power of the Eternal Word which went out from Him; for the human nature of Christ

Tostatus.

Cyrl.

Barradius.

¹ "Gloss.: non quærit ut doceatur quæ nesciat, sed ut mulier confiteatur. Et hoc tum propter mulieris meritum per humilem confessionem, tum propter astantium ædificationem, tum propter Dei laudem et glorificationem, tum propter spem archisynagogi erigendam." —Gorranus. "Quæres cur Christus

noluerit miraculum latere, sed coegerit mulierem ut coram omnibus factum narraret? Vera ratio litteralis est quia voluit Christus fidem archisynagogi, quem ad suscitandam filiam in domum sequebatur, hoc miraculo confirmare." —*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione.*

Avendaño. was but the instrument by which He worked. As God, then, He healed the woman; as man He perceived that the Divine power which was united to His human nature had done this miracle. In the inseparable union of the two natures of man and God, Christ Jesus was one person, doing both Divine and human things. As He was the eternal self-existent God, He, by His inherent power, wrought miracles; as He was man, born in the world, He did lowly and human things. His body then healed not, but it conveyed healing, since it was united inseparably with the Divine nature, and was its instrument. It is evident, indeed, that this healing virtue did not reside in the body of Jesus, for this was pressed on all sides by the multitude, without giving forth any virtue to them; nor did it abide in His garments, for these the soldiers afterwards parted amongst them, without receiving from them any blessing.¹

Barradius.

Salmeron.

Chrysostom.

Great was the crowd which followed the steps of the Redeemer, many were the persons *thronging* around Him, and yet only one touched Him to her cleansing and to the healing of her infirmity. So now many come to the holy communion of the body and blood of Christ, who are never cleansed and strengthened by this life-giving food.² Many, indeed, press the very body of Christ who never reach forward to Him in faith and touch Him with the spirit. Many utter words of prayer with their lips who never lift up their hearts to God, who never really pray. Thus is it ever. Out of the many thousands, *from twenty years and upward*, who came out of Egypt, only two entered into the Promised Land. Of those who thronged around the pool of Bethesda, only the one *who first stepped in* was healed in those cleansing waters. Many were the lepers in Israel in the days of Elisha the prophet, but we read only of the healing of one, Naaman the Syrian; so, on His way to the ruler's house, many touched the body of Christ, since many pressed around His person, but only one touched and was healed. They believe not, indeed, who merely throng around Him; only those believe who touch Him. By faith Christ is seen, by faith only He is touched.³

**Ludov.
Granat.
Numb. xlv.
29.**

John v. 4.

Stella.

Ambrose.

¹ "Nihil virtutis emisissent Christi vestes, nisi illa plus Christo quam vestimentis confisa fuisset. Certe multi alii attigerunt et attrectarunt Christi vestes: at pauci sic contigerunt quemadmodum mirabilis muliercula. Hinc Christus sanitatem tribuit non vestibus sed fidei."—*Hofmeister in Lucam.*

² "Tangentem quæro, non premen-

tem: non enim qui curiosè Me premit hunc quæro, sed qui devotè et cum fide tangit. . . . A turbis premitur; à paucis tangitur; caro premit; fides tangit."—*Augustine, Serm. vi. de Verb. Domin.* See *Gilleberti de Hollandia Sermones*, Serm. 1, § 2.

³ "Quis ad hanc non pavebit sententiam? Multi Christiani, multi præ-

Let not, then, the minister of God be discouraged whenever he finds that, of those for whom and amongst whom he has laboured, so few show by their lives that they are the faithful followers of Christ, and when he sorrows because of those who perhaps throng his ministry so many are unbefitted. As with Christ on earth, so will it ever be with the ministers of His Church. Though many are called, yet but few lay hold on Him to the saving of their souls. Many press around, but few touch Him in faith.¹ Nicola.

Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole.

In these words we have three striking effects of a living faith exhibited:—

(1) It makes us the children of God in a higher degree than creation does. Hence our Blessed Lord's word—*Daughter.*

(2) It brings comfort to the soul. Hence He says, and with the saying effectually works peace to the heart of man, *be of good comfort.*

(3) It is the instrument of salvation to soul and body— *thy faith hath made thee whole.* Boya.

Daughter. In this word Christ utters the sum and substance of the Gospel which He came to declare. For what is this but the good news telling us that we are the children of God, and that we have become, by the incarnation of the Saviour, the brethren of Christ Jesus? In these particulars is the faithful soul spoken of as the child of God— Gulliland.

(1) By generation, when we were all made in His *likeness*. Gen. 1, 26, 27. And when the holiness implied in this word, the *likeness* of God, was lost by the sin of Adam, it was restored to us by the regenerating grace of holy baptism.

(2) By imitation; by our walking in all things after the perfect pattern of God's holiness afforded us by our Lord

cipue sacerdotes, Christum Dominum in sacramento Eucharistiæ tangimus, et tamen unus aut alter salutem accipit, et à paucis se sentit contactum fuisse Dominum; quoniam unus aut alter ea fide ac devotione qua hæc mulier Dominum tetigit tangunt et ipsi: quapropter se ipsum probare deberet quisque, ne frustra, aut in ejus potius condemnationem, ad Dominum tangendum accederet."—*Avendaño.*

¹ "Hi sive Clerici, sive laici sint,

licet magnum psalmorum, aliarumque precationum numerum velut pensum quoddam sine ulla animi attentione exsolvunt, ore quidem Dominum benedicentes corde autem per circulos et plateas deliciis operam navantes, premunt quidem illi Dominum, non autem tangunt, quia solo corpore et non spiritu tangunt: id circò virtutem et gratiam ab eo minimè percipiunt."—*Ph. Diez.*

Luke vi. 36. Jesus Christ; and especially by our being *merciful*, as our *Father is merciful*.

(3) By our entering in and possessing that inheritance which God has prepared for us; for *if children, then are we heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ*.¹ In all these particulars have we Christ as our example; for He, who was the only-begotten Son of the Father before all worlds, humbled Himself to take upon Him our nature, that He might restore us the possession which man's sin had forfeited. He took upon Him our flesh, and became *obedient unto death*, that He might give us an example of perfect obedience and holiness, and might enable us to walk in His steps, and He has gone again into heaven to *prepare a place* for us, and so has given us the assurance of that inheritance into which, if faithful children, we shall all enter.

Phil. ii. 8.

John xiv. 2.

Voragine.

Be of good comfort. With these words our Blessed Lord removes all fear from her soul. He tells the woman, and in telling her speaks also to us:—

(1) Fear not because of thy legal impurity, and because of the unlawfulness of thy touch; I cannot be polluted. *Be of good comfort.*

(2) Fear not; have perfect faith in Me. In this thy coming behind Me, and in thinking that thou couldest be hidden from Me, thou showest that thou hast not yet a perfect faith in Me. *Be of good comfort*; Mine eye is on thee.

(3) Fear not; *be of good comfort.* Persevere in thy walk of faith, trust thyself to Me. I call thee *daughter*—remember that thou art the child of God, the object of the Almighty Father's love.

Tostatus.

Dion. Carth.

Jerome.

Thy faith hath made thee whole—thy faith, and the action of *thy faith*, in touching Me, hath done this. Christ does not say it shall make thee whole, but it has already. Thou hast believed, thou art made whole. Our Blessed Lord singles out this virtue, *faith*, for His special commendation—

Nicole.

(1) Because it is the beginning and the source of all other virtues. It is the root, and in its perfection comprehends all others.

(2) By selecting this virtue for commendation, Christ teaches the ruler what is needed in his own case.² It was

¹ “*Filiam profectò non vocasset, nisi de his fuisset quibus dedit potestatem filios Dei fieri, qui scilicet credunt in nomine Ejus* [Joan. i. 12].”—*Polygranus*.

² “Non dubium est quin Jairo omnis

mora satis longa visa fuerit, donec Christus absolvit hanc mulierem: at bonam spem inde concipere potuit, quòd vidit mulierem hanc tam subito pristinae restitutam sanitati. Sola obstitit fidei parvitas, qua non tantum

whilst Christ was speaking these words to him that his servants came to tell him of the uselessness of the coming of our Blessed Lord to his house, since his daughter was already dead. To the father were these words said as much as to the woman. *Be not afraid; do thou also believe.* Jansen. Yp. Mark v. 36.

It was Christ's power, it was His word, which made this woman whole, and spake peace to her soul; but her faith was the disposing cause, as Christ was the potential cause, of her healing. Our faith, indeed, cannot in any way assist God in the working of a miracle to the cleansing of the soul, but it does assist us, by fitting us to receive His mercy, who requires in all who approach Him this disposition of the heart, a full belief in His power, and a confidence in His love. Dion. Carth. Salmeron.

St. Mark tells us that *straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.* It was not, as with a cure effected by the means of medicine, a gradual recovery; it was immediate: nor, again, was it merely a partial healing; it was perfect, in that the very source of the evil was *dried up*. When God heals the sinner, when He lifts up the penitent, He does not merely destroy the evil habit, but He allays the fever within; He roots out every evil desire, and dries up the source and fountain of sin. Mark v. 29. Guilliand. Hugo de S. Charo.

*And the woman was made whole from that hour*¹—from the time, that is, when she touched Christ. This it was which healed her body. The word which Christ spake afterwards conveyed *peace* to her soul. Tostatus.

To her healing three things concurred:—

(1) The hem of Christ's garment, which was the instrumental cause.

(2) Her strong faith, which was the disposing cause.

(3) Christ Himself—His Divine power and love; which was the potential cause in her healing, as it is in the justification of every sinner. Lienard.

credit Christo quantum illa crediderat. Et jam, qui hujus Jairi mentem periculosius discutiat, alius appropinquat, dicens, Noli molestus esse Domino, frustra scilicet venturo; filia tua jam mortua est. Qui hoc nunciabat nihilo magnificentius sentiebat de Domino Jesu quàm de medico quopiam eximio, qui possit segrotanti succurrere, mortuam excitare non possit. Hæc cum audiret Christus, et procul dubio videret bonum Jairum mœrore quasi exanimatum, non expectavit ut princeps synagogæ Sibi loqueretur, sed prævenit

eum, ne fortè omnino deficeret archisynagogus, et diceret, Non opus habeo Te, jam enim malum factum est: mortua est, quam sperabamus a Te sanandam. Igitur, ne quid tale diceret, incredulus enim erat et Judæus, præveniens eum Christus dicit, *Ne timeas: tantum crede, et salva erit filia tua.*—Hofmeister in Lucam.

¹ “Ἀπὸ τῆς ὥρας ἐκείνης—*ab eo momento.* Significatur ille temporis articulus quo hæc dicta sunt.”—Rosenmüller.

So also, with reference to our Blessed Lord, we read of three things which He did :—

Luke xxii.
61.

(1) He looked on her. He beheld her with His bodily eye whom, from the first, He had seen with the eye of His love, knowing all her wants. As that eye recalled Peter from the midst of his sin in denying his Lord, so did it conduce to the salvation of this woman.

(2) He spake, *Be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole*. His is a word of power, not only declaring the absolution of the sinner, but making *whole* the soul.

Voragine.

(3) He touched: for when she put forth her hand and laid hold of the hem of His garment, He touched, and healing was conveyed to her.

Mark v. 26.

This woman, in her suffering and disease, is a type of the sinner weakened and defiled by the ever-flowing fountain of sin. In the many physicians to whom she had recourse, and who did but aggravate her sufferings and her disease, whilst at the same time they reduced her to utter poverty—for she *spent all that she had* in her search for a cure—we have pictured to us the various false systems of religion and philosophy by which the world, after its departure from God, was lured still farther from the true Physician. In these various mazes, all promising rest, but all deceiving the longing heart of wearied man, the sick in soul, the whole Gentile world had wandered until He came, who was not only to point out the path of salvation, but was to manifest Himself as *the way* in which the sinner was to walk.¹ Those who reached forward, who broke through the crowd, and who touched even the hem of Christ's garment—who believed, that is, in the incarnation of the Eternal Son of God—who laid hold of the truth that He bore our flesh and had taken our nature, were, like this woman, made whole of the impurity which had so long time corrupted and enfeebled them. The humility with which they came who sought to be healed, the lowliness of heart and the abasement of man's natural pride, is figured in the trembling woman, not daring to approach Him with boldness, but coming behind Him; not venturing to make even her wants known, but seeking anxiously a blessing, even though she sought it in secrecy.

John xiv. 6.

Theophylact.

¹ "Ethnica illa fœmina tangendo Christum sanitatem accipit; Judæi qui Christum sequebantur tangendo premebant. Juxta illud Petri: *Præceptor, turbæ Te compremunt et affligunt* [Luca viii. 45]. Hic fuit Judæorum tactus; tangendo Christum presserunt, et verberum, clavorum, crucisque tactu occi-

derunt. Ecclesia vero, per fidem, charitatem, sanctaque opera tangens, non premit, sed reficit. Hinc illud Augustini, Serm. clv., de tempore; Quid est, turbæ premunt; fœmina tetigit. Judæi affligunt; Ecclesia credit."—*Barradius*.

Shame, which makes the sinner shrink from the face of the All Holy One, and humility, which reveals his own feebleness and impurity, are inseparable from all true conversions, from all sincere repentance. Alex. Nat.

(23) *And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels¹ and the people making a noise,* 2 Chron. xxxv. 25.
Mark v. 34.
Luke viii. 51.

From the language of the servants who came to announce the death of the child—*Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?*—we learn the apparent hopelessness of the case, and see that whatever faith the father might have had in our Blessed Lord's power to save, it was not shared in either by the servants of the house or by the multitude who had come to assist in the preparations for burial. By their presence, and from the words of the messengers, we learn the certainty of the daughter's death, and also the belief of those around that Christ had no longer any power to remove the cause of grief from the father. Mark v. 35.
Stella.
Spencer.

Let the penitent remember that the Saviour cannot be wearied with our importunities, however much He may be with our sins.² As in so many other instances in which our Blessed Lord displayed His love to man, so here we find Him delaying to enter the house of the ruler until human aid and all means within the power of man were acknowledged to have failed. When the maiden was evidently dead, and when the despair of those around confessed the hopelessness of all earthly succour, then, as in the case of Lazarus afterwards, Christ came. Thus are we taught by the actions of the Redeemer this lesson, that so long as the sinner trusts to human help and is able to resort to earthly comforters, and hence does not cast himself wholly upon God, and look to Him for his healing, he does not really come to God. Stella.
John xi. 15.
Stella.

Around the couch of the maiden was congregated a throng of *minstrels* and hired mourners, according to a custom common amongst the Jews, but borrowed probably from the neighbouring nations of heathendom. These interposed themselves between the dead body and Him who had come

¹ Τοὺς αὐλητάς—literally, *the pipers*. Τοὺς αὐλητάς οἱ θρήνων ἐξήρχον αὐτοῖς. (*Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. 23.*)

² “*Noli, inquit, vexare Illum. Vexationem vocat orationem. Orabat Jairus Salvatorem, qui ejus precibus*

exoratus illum sequebatur in domum suam; et iste orationem vocat vexationem. Multi autem sunt isti similes, qui putant se Dominum frequenter orantes vexare: quare parum aut nihil orant. At Deus non fatigatur orationibus sed peccatis.—*Stella.*

Mark v. 40.
Luke viii. 54.

Nicole.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

to dissolve death and to restore the maiden to life. The first work of the Great Physician was to remove these; to *put them all out*.¹ In the crowd pressing around, and in the Saviour putting them forth, we have the distinction between the work of Satan and of Christ. Thus do the world and Satan hinder the resurrection of the soul from sin: they hedge it around with the noise and distraction of unholy pursuits and of worldly pleasures. When Christ heals the soul, when He awakens the sinner to repentance, He takes from him the crowd of evil friends and of unclean thoughts, and removes the solicitude of abundant cares, and the lust after sensual pleasure. When these are *put forth*, when the soul is left in the solitude of adversity, in the silence of the sick room, He makes the sinner hear His voice and moves him to effectual repentance.²

Acts xx. 10.

(24) *He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed Him to scorn.*

¹ "Utrum à Judæis gentiles, an hi ab illis, consuetudinem illam acceperint, disputatio est inter viros doctos; *Grotio*, ad h. l., imprimis, et *Braunio in Select. Sacris*, p. 370, Judæis inventionis gloriam tribuentibus: aliis gentilibus; quibus et *Wolfius* accedit, et laboriosius pugnat *Spencerus de Legibus Heb. Rit.* lib. iv. cap. 9. Rectius dici existimem, nec Judæos à gentilibus, nec hos ab illis, accepisse: cum enim musicis instrumentis universi uterentur, quibus et læta et tristia canerentur, funeribus etiam tristes tibias, natura et ratione duce, adhibuere."—*Elsner*. "Dans tous les livres de l'ancien Testament on ne voit aucun vestige des instrumens de musique employez dans les funérailles: seulement ajoute-t-il, on y remarque, des pleureux et des pleureuses à gage [Jer. ix. 17, xxii. 18, xxxiv. 5; Amos v. 16], et des cantiques funèbres [2 Sam. i. 17, 18; Paral. xxxv. 25]: mais la musique en était bannie comme une chose importune et à contre-tems; *Musica in luctu importuna narratio* [Ecc. xxii. 6]. Ce n'est, continuë-t-il, que dans les derniers tems que les Juifs prirent des Grecs et des Romains l'usage des instrumens de musique dans les funérailles."—*Calmet*. On which see *Dom.*

Martin, Explicat. des Textes Diffic. pp. 432–437, and *Rosenmüller in loco*.

² A recent writer thus describes the minstrels and the people making a noise at a funeral:—"Directly I entered the house I heard the minstrels and the loud cries of the people. I was led into a large, long room: women were sitting on the floor in rows on two sides of it. They had uncovered their heads and unbraided their hair. They looked dreadfully excited. Their eyes were red with weeping and watching. The room was always filled, for as soon as one set of people left another set came in. The women on the matted floor were all clapping their hands or striking their bosoms in time with the monotonous melody which they murmured. After singing, they started to their feet, and shrieked as loudly as they could, making a rattling noise in their throats for three or four minutes. . . . The real mourners and the amateur actresses in these scenes are usually ill afterwards; but the professional assistants do not appear to suffer from the fatigue or excitement, and they do not lose their self-control for a moment."—*Domestic Life in Palestine*, by Miss M. E. Rogers, pp. 164–167.

She is not dead but sleepeth;¹ awaiting My voice, and sleeping only until I awaken her. Tirinus.

Our Blessed Lord allowed none of this crowd to enter and be witnesses of this great miracle. Why on this occasion He acted so differently from what He did at other times is evident from what we are told of the temper of this multitude of *minstrels and the people* who were *making a noise*. The scoffs of these hired mourners show us that they were unprepared reverently to behold the manifestation of His power and love.² Why He allowed only three of His own Apostles to enter into the house must remain unknown to us. Those only who were afterwards with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and near to Him in the agony in the garden of Gethsemane, were witnesses of this first manifestation of Himself as the Lord of life and death. With these He permitted the parents of the maid to be present. Afterwards, it may be, because the hearts of men were the more prepared for this display of His almighty power, He allowed the whole of His Apostles and the crowd by the gate of Nain to see the self-same miracle; and later still, when His own death and resurrection were about to take place, the people of Bethany and Jerusalem were made witnesses of a similar proof of His Godhead. He first prepared men's hearts by the fame of this miracle, and then allowed them to see like wonders. Matt. xvii. 1.
Matt. xxvi.
87.
Luke vii. 11.
John xi. 18,
19.
Jana. Gand.

The *scorn* of the multitude at our Blessed Lord's words is a testimony to the fact that they knew that the maiden was dead, and is thus a proof of the reality of this miracle of Christ. Bengel.

In what way, then, are our Saviour's words to be understood—*the maid is not dead, but sleepeth*? Ancient and modern commentators have given two paraphrases or interpretations of these words—

(1) Some have supposed our Blessed Lord to mean, She is not dead to Me, to whom all things live; for to Christ, who is the essential *life*, there is nothing dead. Hence—especially since the incarnation and resurrection of Christ, our *first-fruits* from the dead—we, having a sure hope of the resurrection of the dead, speak of them as those that sleep. So that though to men she was dead, yet to God—and Christ Jerome.
Chrysostom.
Theophylact.
1 Cor. xv. 20.
Cyril.

¹ This is a form of speech known to the Jews, and recognised as such by the writers of the Talmud. "It was very ordinary among them to express the death of any one by the word נָדָם, which properly signifies to sleep. נָדָם when N slept, that is, when he died;

a phrase to be met with hundreds of times in the Talmudists."—*Lightfoot, Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmud.*

² "Ubi Christus accedit, debet recedere, quicquid est mundi. Non sanatur in solidum anima, nisi turbam passionum ejicias."—*Avancinus.*

Bede. is God—she did but sleep.¹ But this seems hardly to be the meaning of our Blessed Lord in this place, since this would be not characteristic of the maiden's condition, but

Jansen. Yp. would be equally true of all that are dead.

(2) Others have understood our Saviour to mean, *She is not dead, but sleepeth*, since it is as easy for Me to awaken her from death as for you to arouse each other from sleep; and that He would thus take from us all fear of death, by pointing to the facts of this resurrection which He was about to effect, and by the miracle and by His words assuring us that death is but a mere sleep, of which He is Himself the guardian.²

Foran. These words, indeed, sound not as a mere declaration of a fact; they are far more than this. As the Incarnate Word brought life to man, so His word now spoken gave life to this dead body. These words, then, *She is not dead, but sleepeth*, are the effective means by which He changed death itself into a sweet sleep to this maiden. Just as in the case of sinners to whom He said, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*—meaning not that they had already been forgiven, but that by this word the iniquities of the past were removed: so when He said, *The maid is not dead*, by that very word He raised her from death; and when He said, *She sleepeth*, He gave her, in place thereof, that rest which is but the shadow and the image of death.³

Matt. ix. 2.
Luke vii. 48. *And they laughed Him to scorn, knowing*, as St. Luke adds, **Luke viii. 53.** *that she was dead.* Let us not be weary in well-doing, nor shrink from the duties of love, because of the contempt of the multitude. The scorn of the people is no real condemnation of religious truth. Few were they who believed in

¹ "Vobis mortua est, Deo autem, qui suscitare potest, dormit, tam in corpore quam in anima."—*Glossa*.
"Mortua fuerit puella parentibus quidem et plangentibus imò omnibus tunc præsentibus, sed Christo dormiebat, cui facilius erat puellam à morte revocare quàm nobis quempiam à somno."—*Hofmeister in Lucam*.

² "Hominibus mortua, qui suscitare nequiverant, Deo dormiebat, in cujus ditione et anima recepta vivebat et caro resuscitanda quiescebat. Unde mos Christianus obtinuit, ut mortui qui resurrecturi esse non dubitantur dormientes vocentur, sicut Apostolus; *Nolumus*, inquit, *vos ignorare, fratres, de dormientibus, ut non contristemini, sicut et cæteri qui spem non habent* [1

Thess. iv. 13]."—*Bede*.

³ A modern Jesuit commentator of the Rationalistic school apologises for these words of our Blessed Lord by reminding us, "*Aliud est mentiri, aliud rhetoricis figuris orationem ornare*" (*Comment. in Marcum Francisci Xaverii Patritii, Romæ, 1862, p. 59*). But surely Christ's words are never mere rhetorical flourishes. It is more reverent, and therefore more truthful, to say, in the words of an older commentator, "*Christus, antequam surrexisset, verbo illam sanasset, dicendo, Non est mortua, sed dormit*" (*Beaux Amis*). And *Rosenmüller* remarks, "*Christus hoc verbo uti, quia puellam à mortuis excitare jam secum constituerat.*"

Christ; few were they who followed Him. The priests took counsel against Him; the Pharisees accused Him openly of blasphemy; the Scribes tempted Him; Herod denied Him; the crowd followed Him with bitter cries—*Crucify Him! crucify Him!* But sinners, freed by His word from their old sins and from the yoke of Satan, gave praise to God and bore witness to the reality of His power, and to the mercy which had raised them, like this young maiden, from the dead. Let us, however, remember that not merely those who *scorn* Him by words, but also those who do not obey Him, mock Christ. Those in whose ears the offers of salvation are uttered, and who harden their hearts against His call—those who own the truth of God's word, and yet remain in the grave and charnel-house of their sins—*scorn* Christ as well as those who openly deny their Incarnate Lord, who scoff at all spiritual influences, and who laugh at the proofs of conversion in the sinner in whose heart Divine grace has wrought repentance and perfected holiness.

John xix. 6.

Ferus.

Alex. Nat.

Those who are ready at every difficulty which they meet with in Holy Scripture to *scorn*—the light-hearted *minstrels* and pleasure-seekers of the world—are ever unable to see the mighty works of God, which He reveals only to the humble and reverent soul.

(25) *But when the people were put forth, He went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.*

Christ dismissed the crowd of hired mourners and attendants. He *put them forth*—

(1) Because only those who believed were worthy to witness the miracle which He was about to work in the resurrection of the maid.

Königsteyn.

(2) In order, it may be, that those to whom His act of mercy and power directly applied—the parents of the child—and His chosen Apostles might the better witness the miracle which He was about to perform in raising the dead.

Rosenmüller.

He *put forth* the crowd of hired mourners and others. He took with Him only *Peter, and James, and John*,¹ and *the father and the mother of the maiden*. So is it in the conversion of the soul from sin. The Great Physician puts forth

Luke viii. 51.

¹ "Illos tres Apostolos etiam in montem secum duxit, ubi erat transfigurandus, Matt. xvii. 1. Et in hortum, descensurus in mortis agonem, Matt. xxvi. 37. In hortum, ut essent

testes infirmitatis humanæ pro nobis assumptæ: in montem, ut majestatis divinæ: in domum Jairi, ut futuræ resurrectionis."—*Bredembach*.

the minstrels—those whose voices drown the whispers of the conscience; those who make excuses for sin, as that it is not so great after all, that the sin which they commit is only that which is done by multitudes beside, that something must be allowed to youth and position in the world, or that it will be time to repent when old age comes. These excuses, which beguile, and all evil companions, who prevent the voice of God from being heard by the soul, must be driven forth before the sinner can arise from his bed of lethargy and sin.

Corn. & Lap.

Here we have the tokens of God's immediate presence, the proof of the Divinity of the Incarnate Saviour. Here is no mere prophet's commissioned work: it is the Lord of life manifesting Himself as He is. Christ it was that *took* the maiden *by the hand*. He it was who spake with the voice of authority, *Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.*¹ He touched her; for it is He whose *right hand hath* this *pre-eminence*, that it *bringeth mighty things to pass*. He spake, and in His own name commanded her to *arise*. In taking her by the hand, our Blessed Lord did three things—

Mark v. 41.

Ps. cxviii. 16.

Bede.

(1) He answered the prayer of the father who besought Him to come and lay His hand on her.

(2) He attested that it was He who had given her life again.

Tostatus.

(3) He teaches us that it is by our contact with Him, because He has come near to us in taking our flesh, that we shall rise again. Hence it may be that in the case of this, the first whom He raised from the dead, we read that He *took her by the hand*, whereas we are not told this of the other two; and, indeed, we know that in the resurrection of Lazarus He spake but the word, and the dead arose without touch from Christ's hand. In this, the first of those whom He restored to life, He showed forth the power of His body by manifesting its efficacy in raising the dead.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

John xxi. 13.

Maldonatus.

And then, having raised her from the dead, just as afterwards, in testimony of the reality of the resurrection of His own body, He ate and drank, so now He declared that it was the natural body of the maiden which had risen to new life by the command to give her bread. If we would effectually show forth the reality of our resurrection from sin, we must do so, not by our profession, but by the way in which we perform the every-day duties of our life,—by our practice, as it were, in our eating and drinking.

¹ "*Puella, surge.* Quòd dicit puellam, indicatur non tam facile esse senem defunctam surgere quam puellam. Difficile est animam quæ in peccatis consenuit ad vitæ novitatem reparari; multo verò est facilius puellam quæ nondum peccato assuevit ad novæ vitæ sensum adducere."—*Paulus de Palacio.*

Abundant were the proofs of this miracle. The messengers who came to declare the maiden's death, and represent to the ruler the uselessness of troubling Christ; the presence of the hired minstrels, and the notoriousness of the fact of her death, which led them to laugh to scorn the declaration that she was then sleeping; the presence of the parents and the three Apostles—the chosen witnesses of the maiden's resurrection from the dead; and the evidence of the senses of those who saw her after her restoration to life. That she was really raised to life was proven by the food of which she partook—food not given to her by Christ, but by those who could best attest the fact of her death, and now of her resurrection.¹ Tostatus.

Spiritually, we are here taught that so long as the noise and bustle of sin fill our heart we cannot awake from our sleep of sin; only when the multitude of worldly cares are banished from the heart can the voice of God be heard, and the soul shake off its deadly slumbers. God ever deals so with the penitent. He first takes him apart from the multitude, or *puts forth* the crowd which surrounds him, in order that He may heal him: as His miracles of grace, the resurrection of the soul from dead, from sinful works, is done in the silent communing of His Spirit with the soul of the sinner. And yet when God in His great love to us removes the bustle of worldly occupation from us—when He lays us on a bed of sickness, that so He may shut out the world from us, and makes earthly things distasteful to us; when He deprives us of the favour and the friendship of the world, which is at *enmity with God* and with man's true interests, men murmur, not seeing in all this the token of God's great love, and that He is thereby awakening them from their slumbers. Barradius.
Gregory.
De Sac.
James iv. 4.

In this miracle, then, of the raising of the maiden to life, we have a picture of the economy of God's dealings with the sinner:— Nicola.

(1) He removes him from the bustle around, and from the tumult of sinful passions.²

(2) He makes him hear His voice, whether in the ordinary ministry of His Church or in some other way, calling him to awake from his sleep of sin.

“Quod jussit Christus puellæ cibum dare, confirmat fidem resurrectionis, ne scilicet videatur phantasma.” — *Hofmeister in Lucam.*

² “Christus et mundus habitare simul in corde hominis non possunt. Si quis diligit mundum, non est charitas Patris in eo [1 Joan. ii. 15]; et Quicumque

voluerit amicus esse sæculi hujus inimicus Dei constituitur. Amicitia enim hujus mundi inimica est Dei [Jacob. iv. 4]. Quamobrem necesse est mundum et ejus amorem ex anima ejici, ut intret Christus, illamque suscitet.” — *Alex. Natalis.*

(3) He stretches out His hand in token of His love to the sinner, and gives him His divine grace in order to assist him in his feeble attempt to draw near to his Redeemer.¹ For no good work can we perform unless He stretches out His hand, and takes our hand in His, and gives us of His strength.

Bredembach.

(4) He aids the penitent to rise from the bed of his sins and raises his heart to things above, since they who would show forth the power of Christ's resurrection by their own resurrection from sin must lift their hearts from earth and fix them on heaven.

Alex. Nat.

Mark v. 42.

(5) He enables us to *walk*—to grow in grace—daily drawing nearer and nearer to Him by the holiness of our conversation. And that we may so walk consistently—

Coster.

(6) He gives us the life-giving and strengthening food of the Holy Eucharist—His body and blood.

A token of the need of this food to sustain the child of God in his heavenward journey, and a type of that sacrament which is for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls, is set before us in the history of one of God's great prophets. When Elijah *lay and slept under a juniper tree* in the wilderness by Beer-sheba, we read that *the angel of the Lord . . . touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.* The food of the soul cannot be given to those who are *dead in trespasses and sins*; it cannot be offered to sinners until they have been aroused from the slumber of sin—have, by God's grace, shaken off the torpor of their sins, and have shown forth the signs of the beginning of a conversion from sin and of a resurrection to spiritual life by a desire to walk in the way of God's commandments.

1 Kings xix.
7, 8.

Ephes. ii. 1.

Alex. Nat.

Eusebius
Emilescenus.

Luke viii. 42.

But the spiritual truths to be derived from the circumstances attending these two miracles are not the only lessons which may be gathered from this Gospel. Commentators, both in olden times as well as those in more modern days, have loved to dwell on the striking allegory or picture which is here presented to us of the way in which Christ dealt with the two great divisions of the human race—the Gentile people² and the Jewish Church. In the maiden lying a

¹ "Qui per te cadis, sine manu et auxilio Dei non resurges."—*Avancinus*.
"Dextera Domini fecit virtutem? Tenet manum peccatoris quando adiutorium ei præbet."—*Th. Aquinas*.

² One commentator, after mention-

ing various opinions, says:—"Communior et recentior sententia docet foeminam hanc gentilem esse et valde divitem, ex civitate Cæsarea, quæ gentium civitas extiterat; venisseque inde in Capharnaum, auditâ famâ miracu-

dying at twelve years of age and the woman with her disease of twelve years' standing we have types of the Jewish Church, called out of the bosom of heathenism, and also of the Gentile nations, unchecked and uncontrolled by the separation of the people of God, and from that moment given over, as it were, to the spirit of idolatry. Long time had the priests and prophets and the rulers of the synagogue longed for the coming of Christ, for the daughter of Sion was lying on a bed sick with sin and hopeless of cure, except from the hand of this great Deliverer. For long time the Lord seemed to delay His coming; and when at length He was born into this world, the daughter of Sion lay at the very point of death; so that whilst He was in the way she did die. When He came to her, sick and sore wounded by long past sin, He did so following in the footsteps of the patriarchs and prophets and rulers of the synagogue; and He came with His disciples that He might raise her from her sleep of death. Whilst on His way thither—whilst seeking out *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*—the Gentile world, perishing by inward corruption, but strong in faith, weary of the many false physicians to whom it had had recourse—the framers of the various systems of philosophy which in vain had sought to cure the disease caused by sin—came to Him for healing. He stayed to cure, and to call these into His fold. To these His garment was no stumbling-block; an Incarnate God no offence. Of this they laid hold; they believed, and were healed. Here the type seems to end. He called to the Jews, but was not heard. The synagogue slumbered as in the sleep of death. The dead corse was more obedient to the voice of the Saviour than were the children of Abraham, who, silent in spiritual death, and turning scoffingly away from the Messiah, crucified Him who should have given them life. And yet here the type does not so much fail, as that it becomes prophecy; for when the fulness of the Gentile world shall have come in, then also shall Israel be raised from death, and be saved, for *she is not dead, but sleepeth*.

Dion. Carth.

Matt. xxiv.
43.Matt. xv. 24.
Rab. Maurus.

Guilland.

Bruno.

Toletus.

(26) *And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.*¹

Our Blessed Lord commanded those who were present that they should *tell no man what was done*. Why this

Luke viii. 50.

lorum quæ ibi Christus patrabat, ut si fortè ab Eo sanitatem impetrare posset."—*Emman. ab Incarnat.*

¹ At the 33rd verse of the chapter we read, *It was never so seen in Israel*. "These words seem to refer, not to that

Stier.

Dion. Carth.

charge was given no man can declare, for no man knoweth the mind of God. It seems to us wonderful that she who touched His garment in secret should be constrained to avow it openly, and that he who publicly asked this, that his daughter should be made whole, was, at the same time, charged *to tell no man what was done*. The reason is with the Most High, and none can say why this was so. It was soon known, however, in *all that land*—that is, throughout the whole of Galilee.¹ All, however, that would seem to have been here intended by the command *to tell no man* was, that the parents should not busy themselves with spreading the account of this miracle; not that the miracle itself should be concealed.

But without trying to speculate as to the reason for this command of Christ, we may learn from it this one lesson, that whilst the conversion of a soul from sin and the raising the dead child of God to new life is an object of rejoicing to the whole Church, it is the duty of the minister of God to be silent as to the effect of his ministry; whilst it is as plainly the duty of that soul to whom the Lord has been gracious, and which has been raised from the death of sin, to make known, not so much by words, but by the proofs of a new life, that God has indeed broken its slumbers and recalled it from spiritual death.

Quesnel.

Acts x. 34.

That our Lord is *no respecter of persons* we may gather from the miracles related in this day's Gospel. Nothing can be more distinct than the circumstances of these two persons to whom Christ at the same time showed His mercy—the ruler of the synagogue and the poor woman: she, sordid and unclean, an outcast by the rigour of the Mosaic law; he, the depositary of the law itself, rich and in authority: she, if an early tradition may be believed, a Gentile; he, a Jew. The universality of our Blessed Lord's mission is shown in the mercy which He at the same time

peculiar miracle only that was then done, but to all His miracles. Consider how many were done in that one day, yea, in the afternoon. Christ dines at Capernaum with Matthew; having dined, the importunity of Jairus calls Him away; going with Jairus, the woman with the issue of blood meets Him, and is healed; coming to Jairus's house, He raised his dead daughter; returning to His own house (for He had a dwelling at Capernaum), two blind men meet Him in the street, cry out *Messias* after Him, fol-

low Him home, and they are cured. As they were going out of the house, a dumb demoniac enters, and is healed. The multitude, therefore, could not but cry out with very good reason, 'Never had any such thing appeared in Israel.'"
—*Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. et Talmud.*

¹ "Fortè ex omnibus ferè oppidis Galilææ non pauci convenerant ad assistendum puellæ funeri, in gratiam patris, qui princeps erat. Et hi omnes in domos suas convolantes, narrârunt per vias et oppida quod factum fuerat."—*Emmanuale ab Incarnations.*

extended to both these ; teaching us that there are none so exalted as not to need His help, that there are none so lowly but shall receive His sympathy and support. Indeed, He does more than this : His love seems especially directed to the poor and the abject ; He stays on the way to the ruler's house that He might heal this poor woman. He makes her His messenger, as it were, and uses her firm confidence in His power to heal, in order to strengthen the weak faith of *Chenneth*, the ruler of the Jewish synagogue.

••• “O Domine Jesu Christe, mitissime potentissimeque Deus, qui per fimbriæ Tuæ contactum sanguinis fluxum in gentili fœmina stetisti, puellam duodennem manus admotione ac divina jussione potenter à mortuis resuscitasti, firmasti parentes ejus in fide, ac nobis operosæ charitatis ac profundæ humilitatis reliquisti exemplum ; miseri homines eodem sanguine fluimus, per peccata enim nostra omne robor, omnis gratia, omnes virtutes, à nobis effluunt, ac sine Te non possumus quin simul ad æternam mortem decurramus : anima etiam in corporis nostri domo defuncta

jacet, et tantum jam efferri ac in gehennæ sepulchrum inferri reliquum habet. Quamobrem ex animo deprecamur, contingamus vestimenti Tui fimbriam, et bonorum operum, mediante corpore Tuo factorum, fiamus participes. Tange nos et divinæ opis manu erige : dona nobis vitam Tuæ gratiæ, ac vires ad virtutem omnium incrementum. Ciba nos crebro sacrosancto Tuo corpore, ut ex hoc in animæ sanitate, atque aliis omnibus Tibi acceptabiles, ad vitam perveniamus æternam. Amen.” — *Coster*.

THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

ST. JOHN VI. 5—14.¹

John v. 21.

John vi. 32.

John vi. 48.

John vi. 14.
Th. Aquinas.

IN the previous chapter our Lord had taught His hearers this truth, that the regeneration of God's people is the work of the Son, and that *as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.* That which the Father doeth, that doeth also the Son, for He is One with the Father. In this present chapter He shows Himself the Lord and Preserver of bodily as well as of spiritual life, and then (verses 26—48) goes on to speak of that spiritual food by which He sustains those to whom He has given spiritual life. That food is Himself; *for the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.* And again He declares, *I am that bread of life.* And to enforce and lead up to this doctrine He wrought the miracle of feeding the large multitude, and showed Himself the creator of bodily nutriment as a sign of what He is ever doing in the supply of spiritual nourishment. And the effect of the miracle on the minds of men was seen in the confession of those whom He had fed with the bread of earth. *This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.*

[For the commentary on the Gospel for this day see that of the Fourth Sunday in Lent, which comprises the verses of this chapter, from 1—14 (Commentary, vol. i. pp. 343—356); also, that for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity, Mark viii. 1—9, upon the miracle of the feeding the four thousand (vol. ii. pp. 390—404).²]

¹ The Gospel for the Sunday next before Advent Sunday, according to the Sarum Use, and that of the Roman Church in ancient times, as shown in the old Lectionary published by Pamelius, is the same as in our own Office-book, with which also the Arbutnot Missal agrees. According, however, to present Roman usage, the Gospel for

the Sunday before Advent is St. Matthew xxiv. 15—35: that in the Parisian Missal is almost identical, St. Matt. xxiv. 15—36: the Gospel read in the Greek Church is that for the Seventh Sunday of St. Luke, taken from St. Luke viii. 41—56.

² "It seems to be the method of John to move in a ternary way, choos-

ing the incidents of his narrative by threes. Thus he relates *three* miracles which were accomplished in Galilee: first at the marriage, chap. ii.; the second on the nobleman's son, chap. iv.; the third the feeding five thousand men in this passage. *Three* miracles also which Christ did in Judæa: the first at the Feast of Pentecost, on the impotent man at Bethesda, chap. iv.; the second after the Feast of

Tabernacles, on the blind man, chap. ix.; the third on the dead man Lazarus, before the Passover, chap. xi. So also, after the Resurrection, he has described, in all, *three* appearances in which the Saviour exhibited Himself to the disciples. *This is now the third time that Jesus showed Himself to His disciples, after that He was risen from the dead, ch. xxi. 14.*"—*Bengel.*

•• Domine Deus qui multitudinem populi in deserto mirabiliter reficiens, nos erga pauperes commiserationem docuisti, præsta, ut eorum necessitatibus ex vera charitate communicantes,

promissa misericordibus præmia consequamur, qui vivis et regnas cum Patre Deus per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen."—*Brev. Bituriconæ.*

ST. ANDREW'S DAY.

ST. MATTHEW IV. 18—22.¹

Mark i. 16—
18.
Luke v. 2.

(18) [*And*] *Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.*

WE find in the Gospels the record of three separate calls of St. Andrew and his brother St. Peter²—

John i. 35—
42.

Th. Aquinas.

(1) Whilst a disciple of St. John the Baptist, Andrew was drawn by the fame of Christ to seek Him, and afterwards brought his brother Peter to our Blessed Lord: this call was one to an acquaintance with the life and doctrines of the Messiah, and to a familiarity with Christ. After this the brothers seem to have returned to their master John, and, as this passage shows, they still followed their trade as fishermen on the sea of Galilee.

(2) When Christ, having entered into the boat of Peter, first taught the multitudes on the shore from that boat by

¹ “The Gospel and Epistle chosen for this festival intimate the true reason of our Church in celebrating the memories of the blessed Apostles and Evangelists unto God’s honour, namely, because they were *fishers of men, ambassadors of peace, preachers of good tidings* [1 Cor. iv. 1], even the disposers of the riches of God in Christ indifferently to men of all sexes and sorts, in that *their sound went out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world* [Psalm xix. 4]; and so by consequent principal instruments of God to the work of our salvation and eternal happiness.”—*Dean Boys*.

² “Ter à Christo vocati sunt hi duo fratres, Andreas et Petrus. 1°. Joannis,

i. num. 40, et seq., quæ tamen non tam vocatio quàm admonitio et futuræ vocationis præparatio fuisse videtur. Tantùm enim prædicit Christus Petro quod futurum erat: *Tu, inquit, vocaberis Cephas*. 2°. Lucæ v. 1 et 10, quæ etiam propriè vocatio non fuit; tantùm enim dicitur viso miraculo captorum piscium, subductis ad terram navibus, relictis omnibus, secutos fuisse Christum. Sed illud *relictis omnibus* non significat omnino abdicatis, sed tantisper dimissis, ad eum modum quo Samaritana, relictâ hydriâ, venit in civitatem, Joan. iv. 28. 3°. Hoc cap. Matthæi, cùm propriè vocati sunt, et ipsi, omnibus abdicatis, Christum sunt secuti.”—*Menochius*.

the miracle of the wondrous draught of fishes, He shadowed the future life of these brothers, and called them both to be His disciples.

(3) On the occasion referred to in this part of the Gospel, they were called to forsake all earthly pursuits and to follow Christ more closely as His Apostles. Some commentators and harmonists have supposed that the miraculous draught of fishes in this same *sea* or lake¹ took place after the incident described by St. Matthew. This, however, seems unlikely; and the opinion itself is in opposition to the judgments of not only the far larger number of commentators, but to those whose opinion on such a point is deservedly of greatest weight.

Avendaño.

E. p. Greenwell.

Augustine.
Avendaño.

We find by St. John's account of the first interview between St. Andrew and his Divine Master that he had been one of the disciples of John the Baptist, and that it was the teaching of his master, and especially his words respecting Christ, *Behold the Lamb of God*, which directed his attention to the Messiah. In this way was John the messenger of Christ. Thus did he *prepare . . . the way of the Lord*, by preparing his own disciples to be the future Apostles of Christ. And here we may well note that our Blessed Lord, though He had received St. Andrew and another of John's disciples, and though they had *abode with Him* for a while and had listened to His teaching, yet He did not call them to be His followers and Apostles until after the mission of the Baptist had come to an end, and he had been cast into prison in preparation for his martyrdom by Herod. Then the Messiah went forth, and called to be His own followers those whom John, by his teaching, had prepared for this office. And though He, who had power over nature, could doubtless sway the hearts of all men, and by one act of Divine power might have fitted them to be the messengers

John i. 36.

Matt. iii. 3.

Stanhope.

John i. 39.

Matt. iv. 12.

Sylveira.

¹ This inland sea bore anciently the name of Chinnereth [Numb. xxxiv. 11; Deut. iii. 17; Josh. xii. 3], from the name of a city on its borders [Josh. xix. 35]. The land of Chinnereth extended along the northern shore of this sea [1 Kings xv. 20], and lay within the limits of Naphthali. In the New Testament this name Chinnereth does not occur, but the sea is there called that of Gennesareth—a corruption, as Lightfoot thinks, of the former name ["transiit nomen Chinnereth in Geneser"]. The name Genesera is that by which it is commonly called by Josephus, Strabo,

Pliny, and the Romans. The name sea of Galilee was given to it from the circumstance that that province lay along the whole western border of these waters. After the city of Tiberias became, in the time of Herod Antipas, the capital of Galilee, the name of this city was used to distinguish the sea on which it lay: hence "the sea of Tiberias" in John xxi. 1. This at length became the usual name of the lake or sea, and, corrupted into Tabaria, is the Arab name to the present day. (See *Ritter's Comparative Geography of Palestine*, vol. ii. Eng. trans.)

Beaux Amis.

Chemnitz.

John II. 11.

Barradius.

Pseudo-
Chrysostom.
Acts iv. 20.

and stewards of His mysteries, yet, as though to teach us the need of preparation and the necessity of daily growth, in order to fit us for the work of His Church, we find the Apostles of Christ prepared by successive stages for the spiritual work which was assigned them; and all these are recorded for our learning. John had preached to them of repentance. He led them to Christ, from whose lips they heard the whole will of God. Whilst at Bethabara, in attendance upon the Baptist, they had leisure to meditate on the evident fulfilment of prophecy in the person of the Messiah. At Cana of Galilee they were, as it would seem, the witnesses of His first miracle in that place. And now, again, after John had been cast into prison, they had heard our Blessed Lord preach every Sabbath in the synagogue of Capernaum. Then, and not until then, when their hearts had been opened by His teaching; when they believed on Him because of His miracles; when, not by any sudden fascination, but by long preparation, they were ready to obey His commands—then He spake the word which He had never before uttered to them, and bade them *follow* Him.

At the very commencement of our Blessed Lord's public ministry He made choice of those who should be fitted to become His Apostles through being daily witnesses of all His mighty deeds; and who, hearing the truths which He taught, would be able, with confidence, to go forth on their mission, declaring to all men that they did but speak the things which they had *heard and seen*.¹

He was *walking*, who calls all men to walk in the paths of His commandments, and to be ever going forward in their Christian calling—*walking*, that is, in holiness of life.² Especially does He here present Himself as a pattern to His ministers, who are thus bidden to be unceasingly active in their Master's work, and to be ever *walking* forth, in order

¹ "Ille qui illos ad tale ministerium elegit, tales fecit atque composuit, quales ad tantum ministerium decebat ut essent. Quare sine dubio sanctiores omnibus aliis sanctis fuere Apostoli; acceperunt enim *primitias Spiritus*, ait Paulus. Fuerunt enim duodecim illæ tubæ argenteæ, quibus olim ad festa Dei populus Israel vocabatur [Num. x. 8]; hi enim duodecim Apostoli vocibus suis argentinis mortales omnes ad festa regni cœlorum vocaverunt: pueri enim illi sunt per quos verus Paterfamilias ad nuptias et ad cœnam universos

homines invitat. Fuerunt enim illæ duodecim juga bovim, quibuscum arabat Helisæus; nam verus Helisæus Christus Dominus, his duodecim Apostolis universam coluit terram, ut Deo fructus vitæ æternæ fructificaret."—*Avendaño*.

² "Stare Dei significat æternitatem et immobilitatem; ipsius ambulare temporalem nativitatem. Per hoc ergo quod ambulans discipulos vocavit, significatur quod per mysterium suæ incarnationis nos ad se traxit."—*Th. Aquinas*.

to heal souls and to draw all men to Christ. Here, by the *sea of Galilee*, the type of this world, with its waters of sin and its waves of trouble, He was *walking*, and looking upon the sorrows and miseries which sin caused; and there, engaged in His mission of mercy, He *saw* not only with the bodily eyes, but with that Divine insight which looked into the hearts of men, *two brethren*, whom He called to be His Apostles. By selecting these He emphatically signifies His commendation of brotherly love and unity, and teaches us that those who do not observe the law of brotherly concord separate themselves from the order of spiritual pastors. Of these, one was *Simon, called Peter*,¹ which name had been either really given him at the time when his brother first led him to Christ, or had been predicted as that by which he should hereafter be called upon his full confession of Christ; and with him was Andrew, the disciple of John the Baptist, the first of those of whose coming to Christ we have any record. These two were *casting their nets into the sea, for they were fishers*. Their occupation in this secular craft was a prophecy of their future office and employment in Christ's Church. For as he who casts nets into the water knows not what fish shall be taken in it, so the preacher of God's word, who casts the Gospel net into the waters of this evil world, knows not who shall be thereby brought to God.² This knowledge is hidden from the ministers of Christ's Gospel; for those whom God moves and who persevere in the way in which they have entered, these alone both obey His call and abide in His doctrine.³

Paulus de
Palacio.
Hugo de S.
Charo.
Remigius.

Rab. Maurus.

John i. 42.

Matt. xvi. 16.

Tostatus.

Pseudo-
Chrysostom.

We have here several practical lessons—

(1) God especially blesses those men who are engaged in their own proper duty and employed in their own proper sphere. It was when Zacharias was executing his proper

Fou. Ardens.

¹ Peter is here added to distinguish him from the other Apostle, Simon the Canaanite. "Dictus et Petrus per anticipationem vel etiam dici potest, Evangelistam loqui respectivè ad tempus quo scribebat."—*Emm. ab Incarnatione*.

² "Non dicit extrahentes rete, aut concludentes pisces, aut vendentes quod expiscaverant. Nihil tale: quia prædicatoris munus non est extrahere homines à mala sua conversatione: nec est multos ad fidem ex infidelitate revocare: nec est pro piscatura præbendas percipere. Sed est, studio et oratione et recta conversatione, verba velut rete in populum conjicere. Deus dat incre-

mentum [1 Cor. iii. 6]: et sicut non desperat piscator, non prendens quod optat, ita nec desperet prædicator."—*Paulus de Palacio*.

³ "Sieno grazie al Pontifice San Gregorio, il quale acutissimamente considerò, che Christo chiamò i Pescatori all' Apostolato, mentr' essi stavano sù le spiagge del mare, non raccogliendo le reti, mà sol gittandole, *mittentes retia*: per dinotarci, non dover' essere obbligazion del Predicatore Evangelico, il guadagnare le anime e'l convertirle; mà solamente l'usar quelle diligenze, che son utile à sì gran fine."—*Segneri in Quaresimala. Predica terza*.

Luke i. 8—
13.

Luke ii. 8—
11.

1 Sam. ix.
passim.

Boys.

Tostatus.

Gen. iii. 19.
Beaux Amis.

Matt. xxv. 23.
Paulus de
Palacio.

functions in the priest's office that the angel appeared to him, and announced the birth of the forerunner of Christ. Whilst shepherds were abiding in the fields and keeping watch over their flocks by night, the angel of God announced to them the birth of the Great Shepherd of Israel, the Prince of Peace. So of old, when Saul was engaged in obedience to his father's will in seeking for the beasts which had been lost, his election to be king over Israel was announced to him by Samuel. Here, again, whilst Peter and Andrew were engaged in their worldly calling, Christ called them to be His Apostles, to be fishers of men.¹

(2) We are taught that no secular duties, no honest kind of toil whatever, hinder us from being the disciples of Christ, so that we have the will honestly and earnestly to obey Him.

(3) Christ calls not the idle and inert into the ministry of His Church, for such are snares and hindrances to others rather than the approved ministers of God.² He calls those who are obedient to that law of earthly things—in *the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*—and who, having proved themselves laborious and faithful in a few things—in the work of their earthly calling—are the men fitted for earnest and laborious work in the most arduous of all employments, and are marked out to receive a reward and to be made lords over many.³

Christ was *walking by the sea of Galilee*,⁴ not by chance, not by accident, but in order to call those whom He willed to be His Apostles. He knew before whom He would choose, and He *saw* them before they knew His mind or to what He would call them. Thus is He still in His dealings with all men. They come not to Christ whom Christ does

¹ "It is a dangerous error to think that when we sweat in our trade and calling we do not serve God, and that we are not holy but in the Church. Nothing can defile and pollute the inward man but an impure and impious life and conversation. To take off this imputation, as the devil calls out his disciples when they are idle, so our Saviour chose His when they were busy at their trade, either casting or else mending their nets."—*Farindon Sermons*, Ser. xxvii. vol. ii p. 431.

² "Non vocavit otiantes sed justis laboribus insudantes, ad designandum quod ad fidem vocati de justis laboribus debent vivere."—*Petrus de Palude*.

³ "D. Thomas ex Chrysostomo,

'Captavit Dominus, ait, istam horam ut daretur exemplum quod nunquam debemus amittere servitium Dei propter occupationes.' Major est piscatoribus occupatio, majusque negotium, dum retia in mare jaciunt, ac quando extrahunt. Ut ergo denotaretur, quod, vocante Deo, omnis occupatio, sive illius adsit finis, sive principium, remittenda sit, ac ableganda; ideo mittentes retia vocantur. Nulla adeo vehemens esse potest occupatio, quæ, pulsante Deo, hominem detineat, quin vocem Ejus audiat, et promoveatur ad illam."—*Sylveira*.

⁴ See Dr. Townson's *Discourses on the Gospels*, vol. i. pp. 11 and 152.

not call, though many come not whom Christ calls, since He calls all men. He it is who not only sees and invites, but who gives to all men power to obey His invitation, as He gave these *two brethren* power to obey His word and to follow Him. No man cometh unto Christ, or unto the Father through Christ, whom Christ calls not. Ferus.

By these *two brethren* whom Christ, at the beginning of His public ministry, called to be His Apostles, two peoples—the Jews and the Gentiles, children of one common Father—are signified.¹ Of these were the Church and fold of Christ to be made up. Of these two peoples were these brethren the representatives; for St. Peter was especially the Apostle to the Jews, as St. Andrew appears to have been associated with the Gentile converts. Thus when *certain Greeks would see Jesus*, and when they had applied to Philip for this purpose, we are told *Philip cometh and telleth Andrew*, as though they specially appertained to His charge.² As Christ's eye now *saw* Peter, and drew him to His side, and bade him *follow* Him; so, after his great sin in denying his Master, did He with the same eye look upon His Apostle, and draw him back from sin and despair to repentance. Remigius.

(19) *And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.* Mark i. 17.
Luke v. 10.

He saith unto them, Follow Me—not so much with the feet as by their hearts;³ not in their teaching only, but in their lives, their sufferings, and their death.⁴ *And I will make:* He says *I will*, for He makes them not so now; He does but fit them for this work; He made them so fully when He breathed upon them, and gave them power, and commissioned them to go forth to that work of which now He prophesied. *Fishers of men.* Here, in the first place, He showed them what toil and patience would be required of all those who were called to the ministry of His Church; Gloss. Inter.
Beaux Amis.

¹ "The first preachers came out of Galilee. Cf. Gen. xlix. 21, 'Naphtali . . giveth goodly words;' Dent. xxxiii. 19, 'And of Zebulun he said, They shall call the people unto the mountain; there shall they offer sacrifices of righteousness.'"—*Keble*.

² The name of Simeon or Simon, שמעון in the dialect of Jerusalem, was a common one amongst the Jews, whilst his brother Andrew bore a Greek name. Some, however, have derived this name from אנדר. Both Peter (R. Jose bar

Petros) and Andrew (R. Chanina bar Andrei) occur in the Talmud of Jerusalem.—*Gill*.

³ "Non tam pedibus quàm affectu mutationis."—*Anselm*. "Non tam pedibus corporis quam imitatione et affectu mentis."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

⁴ "Vocat post se, ut Eum sequens semper habeas in oculis, ut videas et premas vestigia ejus, ut pari zelo pisceris homines. Vide dignitatem muneris, indignitatem tuam."—*Avancinus*.

John xx. 22.
Boys.

2 Cor. xi. 27.
Matt. Faber.

Musculus.

Arosius.

that, like the fisher's calling, it should be performed in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often. In the next place, He points out the objects which His ministers were to keep in view. They were to be *fishers of men*; not hunters after preferment, not fishers for money, nor for the honours of the world, nor for ease and earthly respect:¹ but for *men*—for all; for the poor and simple as much as for others: *for men*, not regarding the good only, but toiling to take the bad also within the Gospel net. For our Blessed Lord says not, Follow Mine, or the things which belong to Me, but, Follow *Me*—calling us not to earthly possessions, nor bidding us follow Him in order that we should, through the Gospel, attain to earthly dignities, but to obedience and to bearing His cross, and, through that, to the glory and the happiness of our Father's kingdom in heaven.

These two at first, and the rest of the Apostles afterwards, were called thus to *follow* Christ—

(1) In order that, having been witnesses of all His actions, they might testify to the truth of those miracles which He did.

Acts xx. 27.

(2) That, listening hourly to His words, they might be fully instructed in the whole doctrine which He was about to teach, so that when they went forth after His ascension into heaven they might be able to declare *the whole counsel of God* to the converts to Christianity.

Tostatus.

(3) That, daily walking under His eye, they might conquer the tempter when assaulted by him, and might grow in sanctification, and thus be fit and able messengers of His word, both by their knowledge and by their lives.

And He says, *I will make you fishers of men*: in these words teaching them—

Mark xiii. 11.

(1) That the work which was given them to do was His work, and that He would bless it with success; that the word which they declared should not be their own word, but His; that though it were their mouth by which it should be spoken, yet that the word itself was not theirs, but the Holy Ghost's.²

(2) In telling them *I will make you fishers of men*,³ He teaches them that He will fit and train them for this fishing.

¹ "Piscatores hominum non præbendarum, non decimarum, sed animarum."—*Gorranus*.

² "Dicit *Faciam* quia frustra laborat prædicatio exterius, nisi adsit interius gratia Redemptoris. Non enim virtute sua trahebant homines sed operatione Christi: et ideo dicit *Faciam*."—*Th.*

Aquinas.

³ This appears to have been a figurative expression not unknown amongst the Jews, and is "somewhat agreeable with that of Maimonides [Torah, cap. 1] upon the Talmud—a *fisher of the law*."—*Lightfoot*.

This He, in effect, says no man can do: If ye are made *able ministers of the New Testament*, this can only be so by My working within you. Let this be your care—to be My ministers, and to be obedient to Me, and the rest shall follow; *I will make you fishers of men*. In vain, indeed, would man labour in order to become a fisher of men unless God worked within him and strengthened him to this task. But man must work; for God never works within us so as to destroy man's free will.

Fishers of men—that is, those who, by preaching the Gospel, should draw men out of the sea of iniquity and of the waters of this evil world in which they are engulfed, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah: *Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them*.¹ The world is represented under the figure of a sea—too often a tempestuous one—in which men walk not, but are borne hither and thither, the slaves of passion and of lust, and the willing captives of sin. The world resembles the sea in its instability, and in its being full of dangers to those who dwell in it. As also the sea is full of good and bad fish, so is the world of good and evil men. The net which the Apostles, after their call by Christ, were to let down into the sea was that of the Gospel, by which all men were called from the midst of their sins into the liberty and the stability of God's faithful children. The ship from which the net is to be cast is the Ark or Church of Christ. Those who cast it forth by their Master's command know not what fish may be taken—what men may enter into Christ's fold and become His true disciples. All they know is, that success is from their Master alone, and that He wills that not the rich only, but also the poor, should be called into His Church; not the poor only are to be comforted with the tidings of the Gospel, but the rich also: that all are to be drawn within the same net, and that it is intended to embrace not the Jewish people only, but also the Gentiles; not one people merely, but all mankind. Under this simple image does our Blessed Lord teach His Apostles the greatness of their office. In this way, as often during the time of His teaching on earth, He makes use of the material things of this world in order to image forth spiritual truths. And yet, whilst He promises that the future occupation of His Apostles shall bear some resemblance to that from which

2 Cor. iii. 6.

Beaux Amis.

Anselm.

Tostatus.

Jer. xvi. 16.

Ludov.
Granat.

Dion. Carth.

Ferus.

Ward.

Jans. Gand.

¹ “*In principio creavit Deus cælum et terram. Et Spiritus Domini ferebatur super aquas* [Gen. i. 1]—id est, incubabat ut avis super pullos, quasi confovens ad creaturarum produc-

tionem: ita et nunc Præparatori orbis ab aquis placuit Ecclesiæ principia auspicari; dum ambulans juxta mare Galileæ vocat Petrum et Andream.”—*Coppenstein*.

He calls them, He invites them to something more excellent, and bids them lay aside the material net in order that they may draw men to God by the doctrine of salvation. He takes from them the desire of gain and the pursuit of wealth that He may fill them with longing for that ministry which concerns souls, and that toil by which men are won to Christ.¹ He calls them from the sea, but He assigns them the whole earth, into which their sound is to go forth. They leave their bark at His bidding to become, as it were, the stones on which He will rear the Church of which He Himself is to be the *chief corner stone*. It is no longer the fish of the Galilean lake, good and bad, with which they are to be concerned, but the care of men, the converting the sinner, and the strengthening of the convert.

Ephes. ii. 20.

Luca Brug.

Let us here note two things respecting our Blessed Lord's teaching:—

(1) With what Divine insight into the relations of the things which He had made He lays hold of the lower creation, and of external things, and reveals the spiritual lessons they image, and which they were intended to teach. For outward things are not merely the veils, they are also the parables, of spiritual truth.

(2) The way in which He binds together the old and new dispensation. His words point to the typical expressions by which, in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit had prophetically figured forth the realities which were consummated in the New Covenant. For it was no mere figure, it was no casual imagery, which led the prophet Jeremiah, by the inspiration of the Spirit, to speak of those whom God should raise up for the restoration of Israel as *fishers*. It is no mere undesigned coincidence between the language of Ezekiel and the actions of the Eternal Son which we discover in the prophet's words, when, speaking of the glory of Christ's kingdom, he says, *And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto Englaim, and shall gather exceeding many fish*. God, by the secular calling of those whom He summoned to be the first Apostles of His Church, shadowed forth their future offices and their duties as ministers of His Word, in the same way

Jer. xvi. 16.

Ezek. xlvii.
10.

¹ "Sanctus Andreas Magistrum imitatus, omnia relinquens, Christum secutus est. Parum etiam se cibum curare monstravit dum ad turbas quæ Christum sequebantur saturandas dixit, *Est puer unus hic qui habet quinque panes hordeaceos et duos pisces*; libenter illo carens cibo, ut turbæ saturentur.

Crucifixoribus etiam proprias distribuit vestes, sed crucem ipsi auferre volentibus nullo modo consentire voluit, sed potius in ea mortem sustinere cupivit." —Aresius. Vide et Tillemont, *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire ecclésiastique*, tom. i. p. 320.

as the calling of David in his youth foreshadowed the rule to which he should afterwards be called—the government of God's people, Israel. Stier.

But though our Blessed Lord selected these fishermen to be His first Apostles, and though afterwards He chose others from amongst the poor and unlearned to the same office, yet it is not true that those who believed in and ministered to Christ were all of the same humble lot in life. The courtier of Herod whose son He raised from the point of death was His disciple. Nicodemus, and Jairus, and Joseph of Arimathea, were amongst those who confessed Him before men. To none of these, however, do we find Him saying, *Follow Me*. For His own purposes He selected those who should bear the message of salvation to the world, not from the rich and noble, whom He might have called, but from the humble and unlearned. And in so doing there was a certain fitness in calling these fishermen first of all, since the danger of their earthly calling was to them a perpetual image of the dangers they should brave, and the toils they should undergo, to rescue men engulfed in sin, and driven hither and thither on the waves of this sinful world. John iv. 46—52.
Cajetan.
Bruno.

Let us all, then, learn and practise the lessons which Christ here teaches us.¹ He calls us to follow Him—

(1) By our faith in His revealed word: by the submission of our reason to the higher reason of God.

(2) By our will: by giving up our own will, and by obeying in all things, with cheerfulness, the will of God.

(3) By our outward life and conversation: by showing forth the signs of our Divine Master in all we do and say. Matt. Faber

But these words, *I will make you fishers of men*, not only point out the duty of those whom God calls to minister in His Church—they are words of warning, and too often of reproach, to all such. They remind us that fishermen dare the dangers of tempestuous seas; that they suffer the extremes of cold; that they labour often in the darkness of the night; that they observe anxiously the heavens, and explore carefully the waters, in pursuit of their calling—whilst God's ministers are too often impatient at toil and

¹ “Hac potenti attractione trahi se petebat quæ dicebat, *Trahe me post te: curremus in odorem unguentorum tuorum* [Cant. i. 4]. Non expectes, Domine, ut ego veniam: noli hoc meæ relinquere voluntati; Ipse trahe, Ipse compelle, Ipse coge venire me post Te, sicut Paulum et Matthæum et

Magdalenam, et sicut istos piscatores. Hæc tamen attractio meritum et obedientiam non abstulit, sed auxit, quia arbitrium non coegit, sed inflammavit; non invitos traxit, sed voluntarios fecit; non violentavit, sed potenter concitavit.” — S. Thomas à Villanova.

privation, and the want of visible success in their work as
 Jans. Gand. *fishers of men.*

Peter's name, Simon, signifies obedience; Andrew's, manfulness. Let every one remember, that without obedience none enter into Christ's Church; without earnestness
 Gloss. Ordin. none can remain therein.¹

1 Kings xix.
 19, 20.
 Mark i. 18.
 Luke v. 11.

(20) *And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him.*

Cajetan.

Isa. lx. 1.
 Barradius.

It is not so much their faith, nor even their obedience in giving up what they possessed, which is here pointed out, as the promptness of their obedience—they *straightway* did as He bade them. *They followed Him*, not only by adhering to His doctrine, but by walking in His way, and by imitating His life. Now was fulfilled the prophecy given by the mouth of Isaiah. Now the true Light had come into the world, which they of Galilee, His Galilean disciples, lying until that time in darkness, first saw, and in which they rejoiced.

Chrysostom.

True faith knows nothing of delay: immediately the word is received into the heart and is fixed there, immediately the man believes, immediately—*straightway*—he leaves his nets, he takes up the bed on which he has long time been lying, and he follows the command of Him who has called him from the entanglement of his sins and the blandishments of worldly pleasures.

Gregory.

They *left their nets*—all that they had; not much, indeed, in the estimation of the world, yet it was their all—a sacrifice great in God's sight, who weighs not the amount of what we give up for His sake, but the will and the spirit of him who makes the sacrifice. Thus must we do if we would really follow Christ: He calls us to leave our nets, the things which ensnare us and keep us from a full and perfect submission to His will.² It is not enough that we

¹ "Simon [שמעון] 'obediens' interpretatur. Andreas 'virilis.' Obedientes enim et viriliter operantes vult Dominus habere."—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

"Andreas Græcum nomen est, ab ἀνδρεῖος, virilis, fortis. Græca nomina plurima fuere illis temporibus, et in Galilæa præsertim; tum ob permixtas ibi gentes cum Judæis, tum quod pleraque sunt magnifica apud Græcos nomina; ut Stephanus, Aristobulus, Nicanor, Nicodemus, &c."—*Hardouin.*

"Simon interpretatur 'obediens,' Andreas 'fortitudo.' Et prædicator

debet esse obediens ut alios possit ad hoc invitare [Prov. xxi. 28]: Fortis ut non terreatur comminationibus [Hierem. i. 18; Ezech. iii. 8]."—*Th. Aquinas.*

² "Qui Christi volunt esse discipuli, triplex debent rete fugere. Primum rete est diaboli [Hab. i. 14—17; Ps. cxl. 5; cxli. 10]. Secundum rete est mundi [Isa. xix. 8]. Tertium rete est carnalis concupiscentiæ [Prov. xxix. 5]. Impossibile est enim animam repleti delitiis spiritus, qui subjacet carnalibus delectationibus."—*Bald. Junius.*

resolve to give up our sins: we must abandon at the same time all things which tempt and allure us to sin—all things which, without being in themselves sinful, yet through our weakness entangle and lead us back to wickedness.¹ Aresius.

In this action of our Blessed Lord we are taught—

(1) What is the power of God's word. At the command of Christ, these fishermen were able to obey His call.

(2) That He first invites: first calls men to Him, and then they obey Him. None, indeed, can come to Him unless He first invite, and give power to obey His invitation. But He Ferus. who calls gives power to all to obey His call.

These men, moreover, are set before us as examples, and we are called to imitate them—

(1) In their ready obedience to Christ. The faith of these future Apostles was seen in their immediately giving up all earthly things at His bidding. There is no greater manifestation of the reality and power of faith than this act of obedience. In the words of Samuel, *to obey is better than sacrifice.*² It is not by ordinary acts of self-denial so much as by the promptness of our obedience to God that faith is shown; not by giving up our substance only, but by the surrender of our wills, which is far harder to flesh and blood. 1 Sam. xv. 22.
Ludov. .
Granat.

(2) In their zeal for Christ; since, at His call, at once they disregarded their worldly calling, abandoned their former occupation, and despised the things which they possessed. In this they teach us that all things are at once to be given up which can in any way hinder us from obedience to Christ and keep us from following Him.³ Tostatus.

(21) *And going on from thence, He saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.* Mark i. 19,
20.
Luke v. 10.

¹ “Aliud documentum insigne nobis reliquit S. Andreas, dum retia deseruit. Ex puro nempè corde debere Christi discipulum ad Deum converti; nec sufficere peccata relinquere, verùm etiam instrumenta et occasiones peccandi: licet enim Sanctus Andreas licitè piscaretur, peccatores tamen repræsentabat, qui in hujus mundi pelago honores, commoda, voluptates piscantur. Idcirco, à Domino vocatus, non mare solùm reliquit, verùm etiam cuncta quæ habuerat instrumenta, ut ostenderet se nunquam ampliùs eò velle

reverti. Pari modo qui ex puro ad Deum convertitur animo, non tantùm à peccatis et Dei abstinere debet offensione, sed etiam instrumenta et occasiones quæ illum ad peccatum aliquo modo impellere possent planè deserere.”
—Aresius.

² “Obedientia victimis jurè præponitur: quia per victimas aliena caro, per obedientiam verò voluntas propria mactatur.”—S. Gregory.

³ “Qui non est hodie eras minus aptus erit.”—S. Bernard.

Tostatus. James is spoken of as the son of Zebedee in order to distinguish him from the other James, the son of Alphæus.

Beaux Amis. *Going on from thence.* Christ waits not until men come to Him. He ever goes out to seek those who, unless He sought them, would not come to Him. And He calls men as well to enter into His fold as to be ministers of His word to others. *He saw other two brethren*,—thus pointing out that His Apostles and ministers were to be brethren in concord and love.¹ Hence afterwards, when He sent them out, it was by two and two, to preach His Gospel. Those who would lead His people effectually, and teach them the doctrines of Christ, must be *brethren* in mutual love, and in accordance one with the other.² For why did our Lord call His Apostles two by two, but in order, significantly though silently, to admonish us that he who is wanting in affection towards others ought not to take upon himself the office of preaching in Christ's Church.

Gregory. And these two brothers our Lord *called*, as well by an inward call as by His human voice, to become His Apostles. **Beaux Amis.** And not without significance we are told that they were *in a ship with Zebedee their father*: thus the Holy Spirit would point out to us that their natural affection, the love which they showed to their father, was a preparation for their reception into the number of Christ's Apostles.³

Theophylact. Our Blessed Lord called these four—Peter and Andrew, James and John—at the same time, for by their abode they were fellow-townsmen, united in affection, members of the same earthly calling, and bound together by the tie of brotherly love. Deeply significant is this fact, that the four who were first called to be His Apostles were two pairs of brethren. He thus hallows and rewards that tenderness which we call natural affection, but which is not less the gift of our heavenly Father. Fittingly, therefore, did He rear the brotherhood of His Church on the foundation of love, who willed that copious fountains of love should flow throughout His Church, and that the highest gifts of nature, as well as of grace, that human and Divine love, should bind together more firmly those who, by their lives as well as by

¹ "Lex nova in caritate fundatur."
—*Th. Aquinas.*

² "Sic viventes in unum, ut unum hominem faciant."—*Augustine.*

³ Upon the question "Quare relicto patre Jacobus et Joannes sequuntur Christum?" *Sylveira* remarks: "Ad argumentum factum in principio respondeo, quod parentes non sunt relinquendi,

si non habent unde alimenta possint comparare. Iste autem Zebedæus, licet dives non fuerit, tamen secundum suum statum solatia habuit unde vivere possit, ut notant hic Albertus Magnus, D. Thomas: nam habebat domum in Jerusalem, ut dixit Nicephorus; deinde habebat navim, et mercenarios, ut patet ex præsentî textu" [Marc. i. 20].

their words, were to preach Christ Jesus to the world. Thus, even in the Old Testament dispensation, He willed that the foundation of the older Church should rest on the *two brethren*, Moses and Aaron, and that they who led His people from captivity in Egypt, the typical land of sin, should thus resemble those whom He should afterwards call to go before His people, and lead them from sin and captivity to Satan.¹ Thus He teaches us that love is the common source of the old and the new covenant, and points out that both the Jewish and the Christian law may be summed up in these two commandments, love to God and to our neighbour.²

Pseudo-Chrysostom.

Barradius.

Avendaño.

Typically, the two boats from which He called these brethren represent the Church of the circumcision and that of the Gentiles—His one Church which was to be made up of both peoples.

Rab. Maurus.

(22) *And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him.*

Mark i. 20.
Luke v. 11.

As in the case of the other two brethren who were first called by our Blessed Lord, what is here noted and commended is the readiness with which they obeyed Christ: not the extent of the sacrifice, but the willingness with which they offered it. It is not so much that they *left the ship*, as the fact that they did so *immediately* upon Christ's call. And though they left *their father* at Christ's command, yet they left him not destitute,—which would, indeed, have been contrary to God's own command of honouring their parents,—for another Evangelist tells us that *they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants* when, in obedience to Christ's call, they *went after Him*.

Cajetan.

Estius.

Mark i. 20.

In choosing poor and unlearned men to be His first Apostles, our Blessed Lord seems to have removed that stumbling-block which the infidelity of the natural man would else have suggested: that the success of the Gospel of Christ was due rather to human eloquence and skill than to the power of God alone. Henceforth none could assert that Christianity was propagated by the sophistry of the human instrument. God usually makes use of the humblest

Jerome.

¹ “Respublica Mosaica fundata est super Aarone et Mose, fratribus, sibi amore conjunctissimis: at Christiana respublica majore amore copulatur, scilicet super duplici fraternitate—id est, super summa charitate.”—*Paulus de Palatio*.

² “Nihil apud Deum tanto in pretio est quam charitas, ob quam et Homo

factus est, et ad mortem usque obediens. Eaque de causa discipuli quoque illi, qui primi ab Eo vocati sunt, duo fratres extiterunt. Ex quo statim per ipsa initia sapientissimus Salvator indicavit, Se discipulos omnes Suos fraterno amore copulari velle.” — *Isidore Pelusiota*, ep. x.

Arendaño.

means to work His will—to accomplish which, indeed, the mightiest are as unapt as the weakest—that so the work may evidently be only His. Had our Blessed Lord chosen councillors to be His first Apostles, they might have been tempted to say, “Our earthly dignity has led to this election.” Had He chosen the wealthy in this world’s goods, they might have said, “Our riches and possessions have procured us this honour.” Had He bidden a ruler or other mighty man to follow Him, instead of these fishermen, he might have said, “My power and my influence has given me this glory.” Had He called a powerful and eloquent orator to be His Apostle, he might have thought within himself, “My skill in oratory has made me necessary to the success of the Gospel, and has led Christ to call me to be of the number of His Apostles.” Had a philosopher been bidden to follow Christ, he might have supposed that the reputation of his wisdom in the learning of the world had led to this honour. But passing by these, the rich, the powerful, the learned, and the eloquent, He chose the weak, the lowly, and the ignorant, and made them to be able and learned ministers of His word, that so the glory might confessedly be of God and not of man. For *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence.*¹

Augustine.

1 Cor. i. 27—
29.

This choice of our Blessed Lord seems to have been made for these reasons:—

Tostatus.

(1) With reference to the world at large. He thus guarded against the calumny which else would have been raised—that the doctrines of Christ had found acceptance with men through the learning or power of the first teachers, and not merely because of the excellency of the truth itself.

(2) With reference to the Apostles themselves. He saved them from the temptation of imagining that they had been elected to the office of Apostles because of any natural fitness in themselves. And thus, whilst He called the learned

¹ “Quare pauperes potius quam divites Deus elegit? Imò quos elegit ante constitutionem mundi: quos præscivit et predestinavit conformes fieri imaginis Filii Sui: quos vocare, justificare, et magnificare proposuerat [Rom. viii. 29, 30]. Quare pauperes in hoc mundo nasci vel fieri voluit?

Nimirum propter eruditionem ipsorum quia videlicet conscientia paupertatis grande est instrumentum et valens documentum, ut creatura teneat vel cognoscat id, quod coram Creatore perpulchrum et valdè justum est, scilicet ordinem Suum.”—*Rupertius*.

and the powerful to sit at His feet as His disciples, He sent them not forth to teach, in order that those who gloried should only *glory in the Lord*.

Jerome.
Jer. ix. 23, 24.
1 Cor. i. 31.

(3) With reference to those who would come after Him; lest the poor and ignorant should be hindered from following Him, as though He were a *respector of persons*, and had selected and accepted only men of worldly learning and of power, and not those who were of a humble spirit, to follow Him and to be His disciples.

Acts x. 34.

Vernus.

Let it be remembered, however, that our Blessed Lord did afterwards call men of station and learning, such as St. Paul; men of eloquence and might through their knowledge of Holy Scripture, such as Apollos. But such as these He called not first, or called them not to be His Apostles, but to follow Him as His disciples only, lest they should attribute their call to these gifts, and not to His mercy. He called them, however, lest it should seem that learned men had no place in His kingdom, and that intellectual gifts were not needed in the ministry of His Church.

Acts xviii. .
24.

Lorinus in
Acts.

••• "O Lord! when Thou dost call, Thou wouldst have me come. And it is from ill to good Thou wouldst have me go; from earth to heaven, from the world to Thee. All Thy employments and offices are holy, just, and good: O let me not delay to come to Thee. Let me by a speedy repentance leave the sins which, as nets, hold me and keep me from Thee; all habits and customs which are vile or vain; all acts and arts of ill advantage

and allurements, which are the devil's snares, and the world's closest and strongest nets. From them all let me haste to Thee and follow Thee, if not as an Apostle, as a disciple: though not a great, yet a true servant to Thee: a preacher of piety by my life to all the world who shall know me, and see Thy grace in me and Thy goodness to me. So be it, dear Jesus, I beseech Thee. Amen."—*Dean Brough*.

ST. THOMAS' DAY.

ST. JOHN XX. 24—31.

John xi 16.

(24) [*But*] *Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus,*¹ *was not with them when Jesus came.*

Acts i. 25.

Luke xxiv. 9,
33.

One of the twelve; that is, one of our Blessed Lord's Apostles. This is a common name for the whole band of Christ's Apostles, without reference to the fact of their being fewer than that number at the moment of Christ's appearance in the midst, or at the time when St. John wrote his Gospel.² When Jesus came to them after His resurrection, there were, indeed, but eleven, since Judas had already gone *to his own place*; and when this Gospel was written by St. John, he himself was the only survivor of the twelve whom the Redeemer had called during His abode on earth from their worldly occupations to be with Him, and to follow Him as His Apostles. At other times we find the same company of the Apostles spoken of by St. Luke as *the eleven*. Not when he uses this word, however, necessarily implying that every one of the *eleven* Apostles were assembled together at that moment, but that the larger

¹ “Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ’ αὐτῶν. [*But Thomas, called Didymus, was not with them.*] The Evangelist does not here, as the writers of lexicons, render the signification of a Hebrew name into Greek, when he tells us, ‘Thomas is also called Didymus;’ but only lets us know that, as he was called *Thomas* among the Hebrews, so was he called *Didymus* among the Greeks. There is not another amongst the twelve Apostles of whom this is said. Simon indeed is called Peter; but these are really two distinct names: so was Nathaniel called Bartholomew; but Thomas and

Didymus are both one name, of one signification [a twin] in different languages. Perhaps Thomas was born in some place where the Jews and the Greeks promiscuously inhabited: such a place was the region of Decapolis; and so by the Hebrews he might be called by his Hebrew name, and the Greek by the Greeks.” — *Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. et Tal.*

² “*Unus de duodecim, quia erat electus ad eam dignitatem quam Deus sacraverat duodenario numero* [Luc. vi. 13]. *Elegit duodecim quos apostolos nominavit.*” — *Th. Aquinas.*

number, the band in general, was gathered together in one place. Salmeron.

Thomas was not with them. Whether, as some have supposed, his absence arose from the momentary dispersion which took place at Christ's betrayal, and that he alone of the Apostles had not joined the company of his Master's followers, or whether from despair now that Christ was dead, or from fear of those who had crucified his Master, St. Thomas held aloof from the assembly of the rest of his brethren, and thus missed the sight of the Saviour on the evening of His resurrection, is a mere matter of conjecture. One thing however is clear, that this withdrawal from the assembled Church was the immediate cause of the unbelief of St. Thomas.¹ It was not until he had joined himself to the rest of the Apostles, at their place of meeting, that our Blessed Lord appeared in the midst, and removed those doubts which St. Thomas had harboured as to the fact of His resurrection. In this we, too, are taught that the sight of the Saviour, the consciousness of His presence, is lost through separation from His Church; and that, as a sure consequence of such separation, doubt and unbelief will spring up in the heart and destroy the faith of him who has thus withdrawn himself from his brethren: whilst, on the other hand, Christ, according to His own promise, will surely be found in the midst of His Church, and in that place *where two or three are gathered together in His name.*² From whatever cause, however, Thomas had separated himself from the rest, his absence is not to be regarded as the mere effect of accident. Whether casual as regarded himself, or arising from mere personal infirmity, this was overruled and made subservient to our good. Divine mercy ordained that by the doubt of this disciple should all our doubts be removed, and that the wounds of his Master's body, which in his unbelief he required to see with his eyes and to feel with his hands, should heal in us the wounds of unbelief. Thus was the incredulity of Thomas made more

Chrysostom.
Stier.

Stanhope.

Gros.

Matt. xviii.
20.

¹ "Sicut animalia cum solitaria sunt, facilius ab infestis sibi hostibus capiuntur et occiduntur ita et homines ab inimico generis nostri hoste nunquam facilius falluntur et perduntur quam cum cœtus et exercitia pietatis communia subterfugiunt. *Væ soli, salus ei non obviat* [Ecc. iv. 10]."—*Hartung*.

² "S. Bernardus, serm. v., de Ascensione Domini, ait: 'Falleris, Thoma Sancte, falleris, si videre Dominum

speras ab Apostolorum collegio separat. Non amat Veritas angulos: non Ei diversoria placent. In medio stat—id est disciplinâ et vitâ communi, communibus studiis delectatur.' Credibile est Thomam alibi discursisse et quæsisse Christum, modò apud sepulchrum, modò in viâ Emaunticâ; sed non invenit Christum, nisi in domo Apostolicâ."—*Matt. Faber*.

- Gregory. profitable to us than even the belief of others;¹ and thus does God at all times overrule the hardness of heart, and the doubts which spring up in the breasts of His faithful ones, as He overrules the persecutions and malice of the enemies of the Cross, to the confirmation of the unstable members of His Body, and to the establishing of the faith of His Church.²
- Cyrl. As, then, St. Thomas was absent when the rest of the Apostles saw their Divine Lord on the evening of the resurrection, when He breathed upon them and imparted to them His Spirit for the work of the ministry, it has been asked, How could this gift have been given to him also, since he was not with the rest? Some commentators have supposed, that as the spirit by which the power of prophesying was given to Eldad and Medad, though they were not assembled with the rest of the elders *about the*
- John xx. 22,
23. *tabernacle*, so, though absent from the meeting of the rest of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit was given to St. Thomas at the same time, and that Christ gave it to all His Apostles when He breathed upon those present. This breathing of Christ upon His Apostles was, indeed, but the outward manifestation of that gift which was inwardly imparted; and since this was given to the whole body of the Apostles, so to Thomas in virtue of his belonging to that band. To this it has been objected, that the gift of the Holy Spirit was hardly likely to have been given to Thomas whilst he remained incredulous of the truth of Christ's resurrection; but that it is more likely to have been given at the time of his confession of Christ as his Lord and God. It may be that when Thomas made this confession of his earnest faith, our Blessed Lord then breathed upon him and gave him the
- Numb. xi. 24
—26.
- Cyrl.
- Gullaud.
- Gregory.
- Tostatus.

¹ "Plus mihi profuit dubitatio Thomæ quam credulitas Mariæ." — Gregory. "Dubitatum est ab illo ne dubitetur a nobis." — Leo. "Credit tarde Thomas, sed credit plene et vehementer, ut nos crederemus citò et libenter. Dubitavit ut nobis omne dubium auferret. Infirmetas ejus nostra est vis et efficientia." — *Wicilius*.

² "It is most likely, at this time, the Apostles were not come together to pray, for the text says a little before that they were assembled together with the doors shut, *for fear of the Jews*. And it is not unlikely that the same fear that made them draw together made him be absent; thinking, perad-

venture, that so many together could not be safe. But whatever the occasion of his absence was we may be glad of it. For, as it made him doubt at that time, so hath it raised a story to confirm us even to this time. And no doubt it was the very will of God that he should be absent, that he might doubt: not so much for his own, as for our sakes. So, as his Master said to His Apostles, Lazarus is dead, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that ye might believe [John xi. 14, 15]; Thomas may say to us, Christ lives, and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that ye might believe." — *Wm. Austin's Meditations*.

same power which He had already bestowed upon the others; or that, when he touched the body of his risen Saviour, the wounds in Christ's flesh at the same time removed his unbelief and conveyed the self-same power to him which the breath of Christ had imparted to the rest of the Apostles. Austin.

As the Evangelist relates so fully the particulars of St. Peter's fall and the denial of his Lord, not that we should think lightly of or reproach the memory of that great saint and servant of God, but that we, warned by his fall, should see the vanity of all promises made only in our own strength, so does St. John record the incredulity of St. Thomas and the circumstances which attended his unbelief in order that we may learn the sinfulness of refusing to believe a truth which has been made known to us on trustworthy and sufficient evidence. And as the mercy and love of Christ were manifested in the case of St. Peter by the look which brought repentance to his soul, so in the case of St. Thomas we are called upon to note the mercy of Christ and His condescension to the weakness and unbelief of His Apostle, and also to thank Him for having given us this abundant proof of the truth of His resurrection in the flesh. Ferus.
Luke xxii.
61.

(25) *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord.¹ But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails,² and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.* John xix. 34.

That Christ was nailed to the cross is not affirmed by any other Evangelist, nor by St. John except thus incidentally. The bodies of the crucified were sometimes attached to the cross by ropes, at other times by nails. By the use of nails at Christ's crucifixion the prophecy in the Psalms was fulfilled. *They pierced my hands and my feet.* Ps. xlii. 16.
Gill.

Thomas seems not to have doubted the word of his fellow

¹ "In Novo Testamento videre Dominum symbolum est divini amoris et humanæ consolationis; cum in Veteri argumentum esset terroris ac mortis periculi. Hinc parentes Samsonis dixerunt, *Morte moriemur, quia vidimus Dominum* [Judic. xiii. 22]; et Jacob miratur quod sine morte viderit Dominum cum dixit, *Vidi Dominum facie ad faciem, et salva jacta est anima mea* [Gen. xxxii. 30]."—*Salmeron*.

² "Ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων καὶ βάλω μου τὸν δάκτυλον εἰς τὸν τόπον τῶν ἥλων."—*Tisch.* So the Vulgate, Syriac, and Persian, and the Alex. MS.; but τόπον is so easy a mistake for τύπον that not much weight will be given to the various reading. Words. and Alf. retain τύπον in the grand place, as did Tischendorf in his earlier editions.

Chrysostom.
Origen.

Apostles, as though they reported that which was untrue, but he thought that they had been deceived either by the coming of an impostor claiming to be the Messiah who had been crucified, or else that they had been misled by an unsubstantial — a spiritual appearance. Hence Thomas declares that he will not believe unless he shall certify himself that He, who had appeared, was really Christ, and that He had a real substantial body. This is not so much faith as knowledge. His refusal, absolutely, to believe their statement arose less from a wish to discredit their statement than from an idea which possessed him of the utter impossibility of the thing itself.¹ Hence he affirms that he will not believe save on the evidence of the grossest of all the senses; that not even if he should see Christ with his own eyes would this be enough, but that he should require something less liable to be deceived than the sight; that he could be convinced by nothing short of sight and touch.²

Chrysostom.

This is, and must ever be, a great error and wrong in man, to will to touch all with our own hands, to make self the judge of all things, and even to determine to reject what we cannot understand by our own self-sufficient power and comprehend by our own understanding and ability; to receive no testimony apart from this.³

Stier.

All sin is complex, including many sins in one formal act of sin; and this is true of the sin of St. Thomas; his sins were—

(1) That of incredulity in refusing to believe, notwithstanding the frequent predictions of our Blessed Lord, that He would rise again from the dead.

(2) Obstinacy in rejecting the evidence of the ten Apostles and of the other disciples who had seen Christ after His resurrection.

(3) Pride and self-confidence in his own power to detect imposition and to satisfy himself of the truth.

(4) Presumption in defining the mode and manner by which alone, if Christ should appear, he would be satisfied of the reality of His resurrection and would believe in the truth.

Corn. & Lap.

¹ "In concilio Arausicano can. v. dicitur, initium fidei esse ipsum credulitatis affectum, eumque inesse nobis per inspirationem Spiritus Sancti corrigentem voluntatem nostram ad infidelitatem ad fidem."—*Bald. Junius*.

² "Quid est fides, nisi credere quod non vides? Fides ergo est quod non

vides credere: veritas, quod credidisti, videre."—*Augustine*.

³ 'Εὐν μὴ ἰδῶ . . . οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω.—"Falleris, Thoma: prius credendum quam videndum est. Fides mortalium est in mundo: visio beatorum in cælo."—*Cyprienstein*.

In the incredulity of St. Thomas our Blessed Lord condemns those who would make their senses the only infallible tests of truth, and who require that outward and evident things shall be the rule by which we are to measure those of the spirit. God made that course of things which we call nature, and we are to regard it as His appointment, for nature is His work; but we sin when we use our inferences from the outward fact to deny His infallible word. He made the senses, the sight and the touch, and yet St. Thomas was censured for relying on and requiring their evidence as the grounds of his belief in the resurrection of Christ.¹ Matt. Faber.

Thousands, let us bear in mind, lyingly say, *I cannot*, when the Maker and the Searcher of the heart knows that, like St. Thomas, they should rather say, *I will not*. Stier.

(26) *And after eight days again His disciples were within,² and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.*

As the same body of Christ was seen walking on the surface of the waters, so by the same Divine power, His body, not ceasing to retain all the properties of body, entered, though the doors of the house were shut. Augustine.

After eight days—that is, on the eighth day after our Blessed Lord's first appearance to His assembled disciples—when they had again met together *within* the same place and room where they were on the previous occasion, He came, though the doors were closed, *and stood in the midst*, so that He might be seen of all.³ But though this was so, yet it is not Salmeron.
Kuinoel.
Ludolph.

¹ "Thomæ difficile credenti Domini resurrectionem similes sunt qui de facili mala de proximo credentes bona de eo vix credere possunt. Ex levi suspitione mortem culpæ de proximo credunt: resurrectionem verò quæ per gratiam fit vix credere possunt."—*Peraldus*.

² "Ἦσαν ἔσω, erant intus—h. e. domi, nam ἔσω εἶναι idem est quod ἐν οἴκῳ εἶναι, ut in vers. Alexand. Gen. xxxix. 11; Ezek. xlv. 17: et sic quoque scriptores exteri loquuntur; v. Kypkios ad h. l. Opposita formula est ἔξω εἶναι Arrian. Diss. Epictet. iii. 22. Apud τοὺς ὁ. Gen. xxxix. 12. Apostolos autem in eadem domo qua antea, et in conclavi eodem quo antea, fuisse congregatos, addita particula πάλιν docet."—*Kuinoel*.

³ "The phrase μεθ' ἡμέρας ὀκτώ signifies *after another week* (that is, as it seems, on the first day of the week, as before, ver. 19); for so the Jews express a week by eight days. So Josephus ['Ant.' lib. vii. c. 9], having said ἐπὶ ἡμέρας ὀκτώ, presently he explains it by ἀπὸ σαββάτου ἐπὶ σάββατον, from week to week. Thus when St. Luke saith [chap. ix. 28], ὥστε ἡμέρας ὀκτώ, *about eight days*, St. Matthew [chap. xvii. 1] hath μεθ' ἡμέρας ἑξ, *after six days*, the truth being that it was that day seven-night, which including the first and the last day is called *eight days*, and excluding these and referring only to the interval betwixt is called *six days*."—*Hammond*.

Lightfoot.

so much the truth that He came in this supernatural way—which is dwelt upon by St. John—but the fact that, through fear of the Jews, the Apostles had again met with closed doors. And the day on which they had again met, the first day of the week, tells us how early the meeting for worship on the Lord's day commenced. We last read of these same Apostles, eight days before—that is, on the previous Lord's day—assembling in this same place. This is the commencement of the Christian observance of Sunday or the Lord's day.

Corn. & Lap.

In this recorded fact—that having left them eight days before He now again visited them—we may see in what a different manner our Blessed Lord held intercourse with His Apostles after His resurrection from that with which He was present with them before. Then He dwelt in the midst of them, and they were always with Him, and held outward converse with their Lord. Now He no longer dwells with them; He comes suddenly when they are assembled; He joins Himself to two of them unexpectedly as they were walking: absent from them for a while, and then for a short time coming to them, as though gradually to prepare them for His approaching corporeal absence and to cause them to trust in His continual nearness to them in the spirit.¹ Thus also teaching us, that when we have risen from the death of sin and have been converted from our former wickedness, we are no longer to live as before: no longer to dwell in the midst of our old sins.

Luke xxiv.
13.

Luca Brug.

Salmeron.

He stood in the midst, and said, *Peace be unto you.* Our Blessed Lord had given *peace* to all His Apostles when He certified them of the fact of His resurrection on the previous Lord's day. He came now, with marvellous condescension, to remove the unbelief of Thomas, and to convey the same gifts of peace to him, giving present peace to his conscience

¹ "His coming to them when the doors were shut teaches us something. We know why they were shut. It was for fear of the Jews, to keep out them. For they were their Master's enemies, and so consequently theirs. Let us, then, do so too. Shut out whatsoever is an enemy to Christ, for that is no friend of ours. Let us shut the door upon the world, for fear lest, if it enter, it crucify Christ in us. It is more safe to hide, and shut ourselves from, than to go out to meet temptation. Christ Himself went not out to meet the tempter, but was led

by the Spirit, and brought to it. When our hearts are thus shut up from the world, our spiritual companions and good thoughts that assemble within us will be safer than before, though they may remain a little fearful and somewhat distracted for a time. But let us shut them up though, and keep them close, neither let them be opened to any importunate-knocking-care, that would feign a necessary business to come in. For Christ can enter when our doors are shut fastest; and will, soonest of all, enter then." — *Wm. Austin's Meditations.*

and promising therewith eternal peace and happiness. Thus He teaches us that His blessings are not merely for the Church collectively, but for each member of it; that His *peace* is not merely imparted to the whole body of the Church, but that it is given as the inheritance of each member—to you. And because of the greatness of this gift of *peace*, because the conscience of the sinner is with so great difficulty assured of the readiness of God to forgive, and to give him the blessing of *peace*, Christ repeats this comforting word, *Peace be unto you*, which He had twice before uttered.¹ Threefold is the peace which we are to seek from God and which we obtain from Him—peace in the conscience, peace with our brethren, peace with Him who is the God of peace.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Austin.

Ferus.

Let us note these several truths respecting our Blessed Lord's coming at this time for the sake of St. Thomas:—

(1) He came to him whilst he was yet in his unbelief, in order to draw him from it. He waited not until Thomas had repented of his incredulity and had confessed the sinfulness of his doubting before He came to him.² So did He come to the world whilst men were yet sinners, and died for them whilst they were in their unbelief; so does He come to each of us, drawing us from the abyss of sin even at a time when we care not for His mercy.

Rom. v. 8.

Ludolph.

(2) Christ came when all the Apostles were assembled together, and not to Thomas alone, in order that, as he had sinned publicly and against the rest of his brethren, by his incredulity, so should he be convinced before all, and make his confession of recovery from doubt in the presence of them all.

Maldonatus.

(3) There was yet one other reason why Christ should remove the doubt of Thomas thus openly, and not when he was away from the rest of the Apostles. He came not merely for the sake of His unbelieving Apostle, but for our sakes also, that through his incredulity and the removal of it He may take away from us all reasonable grounds of like incredulity.

Toletus.

(4) As Christ did not at once remove the doubt of Thomas,

¹ "Quasi dicat, quando sum in medio, est Pax, alias nulla, disce quod nisi Jesus sit in medio et solus omnium tuarum actionum centrum, non habebis pacem. Noli ergo te centrum tuarum actionum ponere."—*Avancinus*.

² As Thomas was absent at the first coming of Christ, eight days before, and as then our Blessed Lord breathed

on those who were assembled, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, a question has arisen as to the impartation of this gift to St. Thomas: on which Euthymius remarks, "When He said, *Peace be unto you*, as at the first, He at the same time gave to him that which He had given to the rest in his absence." —See more in text, at p. 194.

who doubted not from hardness of heart but from infirmity, but left him to the testimony of his fellow-Apostles, and only when this failed gave him that evidence which convinced him of the truth of the resurrection, so does He leave us to natural testimony; and only when that fails us, when human help is evidently insufficient, does He manifest Himself to the sincere and humble seeker, and takes from him all doubt.

Ferus.

(5) We have here another instance of the individuality of Christ's work. He manifests Himself to the Body, to the Church. He also manifests Himself to every one of His members; turning aside from the ninety and nine to seek the one that has erred from the right way. But though He came for the one, yet He came when Thomas was with the other Apostles, that as he had declared his doubt before all, so should he be convinced and make his acknowledgment before all.

But we may well remark, that even when Christ was about to remove the doubts of Thomas, and was on the point of restoring that faith which for a time he had lost, He exercised that faith, and tried him by a new difficulty, in passing with His body into the midst of the disciples, *the doors being shut*. In thus acting He teaches us that great privileges and a larger measure of faith in God are yet attended with fresh trials and with new difficulties in the way of faith.

1 John i. 1.

(27) *Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side:¹ and be not faithless, but believing.*

Gregory.

Our Blessed Lord gave His flesh to be touched, and thus showed the reality of His body; for though it was now incorruptible, as our risen bodies shall be, yet was it the same in nature, however different it might be by reason of glory. And this body bare still the marks of the wounds

¹ "Infer digitum tuum huc, et affer manum tuam. Quibus verbis suadetur id quod de forma et latitudine vulnerum istorum in manibus et latere diximus, et apertissimè convincit non cicatrices sed vera foramina Dominum à resurrectione servasse, non carne resecta sed aperta."—*Jansen Yprensis*.

The words used by our Blessed Lord indicate the different character of the

wounds in His hands from that in His side, *φέρει τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε, καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου*. This would be appropriately said of the smaller wound made by the nails in His hands and feet, whilst *φέρει τὴν χεῖρά σου, καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευράν μου*, would indicate a larger and a yawning wound—that made by the spear in His side.

caused by the nails and the spear—for though, in another world, there shall be no blemishes in our risen and glorified bodies, yet the marks of our conflict with sin will be there—the scars of our glorious victory over temptation, which are not blemishes. And by this command to St. Thomas to put his hand into the print of the nails and into the side of his Lord, we have another evidence of what many of the Fathers assert, that the risen body of our Blessed Lord was without blood. Augustine.

Christ appeared in the midst of His disciples, and showed them the wounds in His hands and side—

(1) That He might convince them and us of this great truth—that He had risen from the grave in the same body which had been crucified, and that He was about to go into heaven in the self-same flesh which He had taken at His incarnation;¹ and that we, like our Great Head, shall rise again in no mere shadowy body, but shall stand at the judgment bar of God, and partake of the consequences of our deeds in this life, clad in that same flesh which had, in this world, shared in all the deeds of the soul. Chrysostom.

(2) That they might ever have before them the testimony of His love to them and to all mankind in the wounds which are the marks of that love. Thus would He also inspire us with gratitude and love towards Him who had suffered so great things for our sake.

(3) That we might have before our eyes the proofs of His having borne our iniquities and healed our sins, and thus be assured of that redemption from slavery to sin and Satan which by His crucifixion and death He had purchased for us. Cyril.

(4) In order that He might remove the doubt of His faithless disciple and might heal the wounds of his mind, which had been inflicted by unbelief;² and not his wounds and unbelief only, but that in healing him He might also

¹ “Observe that the wounds which Satan inflicted in malice and scorn on our Lord’s crucified body have been converted by His controlling power and wisdom into proofs of His resurrection, and marks of His personal identity. They have become indelible evidences of His power, graven, as it were with an iron pen, on the Rock of ages, to be read by the eyes of angels and of men for eternity; and are glorious trophies of His victory over death and sin, and over Satan himself.”—*Wordsworth*.

² “Jove made us not to fear; resolve—speak out: The highest misery of man is doubt.”

—*Marston’s Dramatic Works*, vol. i. p. 156 (ed. 1856).

“Si j’étais chargé de classer les misères humaines, je le ferais dans cette ordre: 1°. Les maladies; 2°. La mort; 3°. Le doute. Le doute m’a toujours paru le plus insupportable des maux de ce monde, et je l’ai constamment jugé pire que la mort.”—*Alex. Tocqueville*.

heal others, and take from them all ground for their unbelief.¹ He convinced Thomas, and has left us this testimony of three of the senses of His Apostle, proving to him by his hearing, his sight, and his touch, that He was the same Jesus who was crucified—for in all these ways was Thomas certified of the fact of Christ's resurrection, and in all these ways have we been assured of the same fact.

Alb. Magnus.

And by making use of the self-same words in which Thomas had already declared his unbelief, *Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe*, our Blessed Lord asserted His own omniscience. He had witnessed the doubt; He had heard the words; He, unseen, had been present when Thomas avowed his unbelief; and now, by using these words—*Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side*—He proclaimed that presence and omniscience; and by thus asserting His Divinity prepared Thomas to acknowledge the truth, that He had power to raise Himself from the dead, at the same time that He brought his sin to his mind by using words which had come from his heart in unbelief. The remembrance of these words, like the confession of sin, was humiliating to this unbeliever; and this humiliation must ever precede true repentance and restoration.

Lamy.

Corn. & Lap.

Maldonatus.

Be not faithless, but believing. Christ says not merely, Believe this fact, but, Resist this temptation to unbelief, and henceforth be habitually *believing*.² Moreover, in saying *Be not faithless*, He taught His Apostles, and still teaches us, that it is the will of man which is the source of unbelief.³ We can, if we will, believe the truths and the facts of revelation; for what He commands He gives all His people the power to perform.

Stier.

John xx. 17.

When Mary Magdalen was about to touch the body of Christ, He forbade her, saying, *Touch me not*. Here we find our Blessed Lord commanding His Apostle to do that

¹ Vide Estium in lib. iv. Sententiarum, dist. xlv. § 10.

² Μη γίνου ἀπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός.—“The word ἀπιστος denotes a settled state of unbelief. Thomas had not sunk to this. His was a state of mind vibrating between belief and unbelief. The Lord does not say, ‘Be not unbelieving,’ but rather, ‘Become (γίνου) not unbelieving.’ He calls him to turn from the evil way which, continued in, would lead him at length to

settled unbelief.”—*Hengstenberg*.

³ “Quæritur: an objectum fidei sit, aut esse possit evidens per ipsammet fidem; an verò inevidens, ita ut fidei assensus pendeat peculiariter à libera motione voluntatis et in homine potestate sit, non assentiri doctrinæ fidei? Certa et communis Theologorum sententia est fidem esse inevidentem; et idè ex libera motione voluntatis pendere.”—*Bald. Junius*.

which before He had forbidden to Mary. The reason for this difference appears to lie in the different temper of mind in these two disciples. Mary dwelt with joy upon the corporeal presence of Christ. Her faith, it may be, rested too much on His material presence. She thought chiefly of her Lord as the man Christ Jesus, and hardly reached forward to His spiritual presence. She had yet to learn that she could take hold of and apprehend Him in His spiritual presence, who, in this way, is ever with His faithful followers. She had not learnt to reverence and to adore Him as God. Hence the command, *Touch me not*. This was not the difficulty which Thomas felt. His temptation was not the forgetfulness of the ever-present God, but the denial of the risen Man, and that the Body which had died on the cross had risen again for the justification of the sinner. What perplexed him, then, was the truth of the resurrection of our Blessed Lord's body, and of the identity of the body which had died with that which had risen again. To remove this, to give His Apostles firm faith in this great doctrine of Christianity, Christ bade Thomas touch His body. Sylveira.

In our Blessed Lord's condescension to the weakness of St. Thomas, and in His care to remove his incredulity and restore to him that faith which he once had in his Divine Master, Christ leaves a lesson to every one of His members; bidding them, by this act of His love, to bear with their brother's incredulity, and to labour for the restoration of his faith; and by the imitation of their Master's condescension to endeavour to remove the doubt and unbelief which clouds his soul. Wordsworth.

(28) *And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.*¹

As the blind man, because of his want of sight, is certified of the fact, which he cannot otherwise know, by his touch, so does the Apostle of Christ, blind through unbelief, know his Saviour by that touch to which he is invited.² Theophylact.

¹ "Tales sunt tardi ad credendum quando credunt firmissime credunt."—*Alb. Magnus*.

² "Cæcus palpando et tangendo res cognoscit, Geneseos xxvii. 21, 22: *Accede huc, fili mi*, ait Isaac cæcus filio suo Jacob, *ut tangam te et probem, utrum tu sis filius meus Esau an non. Et palpato eo dixit Isaac, Vox quidem*

vox Jacob est, sed manus manus sunt Esau. Quemadmodum cæcus Isaac, ut filium cognosceret, illum voluit palpare; sic cæcus Thomas, ut Magistrum resurrexisse sciret, Eum voluit tangere. Isaac postquam palpavit dixit, *Vox Jacob est, manus Esau*; partimque filium cognovit, partim minime. Si quidem vocem agnovit non manus.

Both these words of St. Thomas were spoken to one person, *unto Him*. He spake not, as Socinians would say, to Jesus, saying to Him *my Lord*; and at the same time addressed another in these words, *my God*. But to one and the same person, *unto Him*, were both these words spoken, and one and the same person was recognised as his Lord and his God: the Apostle using the very words which elsewhere are addressed by David to God — *Awake, and stand up to judge my quarrel: avenge Thou my cause, my God and my Lord*.¹ In effect he says, *My Lord* Christ, whom hitherto I have followed as my Lord, I now acknowledge and confess to be *my God*: *my Lord*, by virtue of that humanity which Thou barest before Thy crucifixion, and in which Thou hast risen from the dead; *my God*, who hast raised Thyself, by Thine own power, from the grave. In these words, then, the hitherto doubting Apostle confesses the twofold nature of God and man which were united in the one person of Christ Jesus. *My Lord* is the acknowledgment of the reality and identity of the human nature, *my God* is the confession of the Divine; and by joining these two, and confessing that they met in *Him* to whom his words were spoken, St. Thomas expressed his belief that one and the same person was his human Lord and his God.²

Bengel.

Ps. xxxv. 23.

Menochius.

Ludolph.

Theophylact.

We have here another instance of that law which may be observed in the actions of our Blessed Lord's life whilst on earth, and to which reference has been repeatedly made before. Scarcely shall we find any manifestation of His Divine power which is not accompanied with some incident specially recalling to our minds the reality of His manhood — hardly any instance of human weakness, human suffering, and human sympathy, which is not mingled with some act of power manifesting the truth of His Godhead. Here, by His omnipotence, whilst He is convincing His doubting Apostles of the reality of His body, and thus proving that He was very man, He forces from St. Thomas the full confession of the union of the Godhead and the manhood in His one person — *my God and my Lord*.

Ellicott.

Thomas postquam tetigit perfectè Magistrum resurrexisse scivit; tum vocem tum manus Christi esse vidit à mortuis excitati: neque hoc tantum, sed Dominum Deumque verum esse cognovit." — *Barradius*.

¹ "Ἐξεγέρθητι καὶ πρόσχες τῇ κρίσει μου, ὁ Θεός μου καὶ ὁ Κύριός μου." — LXX. Vers.

² "Vide Dei mirabilia. Quis credidisset ex tam pertinaci incredulitate tantam futuram fidem? Sic nemo credidisset latronem salvandum et Saulum futurum Apostolum: et tamen utrumque contigit. De nullo igitur desperandum est quamdiu hic vivit." — *Ferus*.

But in these words St. Thomas not only confesses the truth as to Christ's nature; he at the same time shows what was the root and source of his unbelief. I have not, he seems to say, believed in Thy resurrection in the flesh, *my Lord*, because I have not hitherto seen in Thee *my God*. Whilst I believed not in Thy Divinity, I believed not in the possibility of the resurrection of Thy body from the grave. But now since I know, by *infallible proofs*, that Thou hast risen again, I know not this only, but also that Thou art *my God*.¹ Our Blessed Lord gave to St. Thomas the *proofs* of His omniscience in the words of which He made use; in which words He recalled to the mind of His Apostle his own expression of unbelief. He convinced him, at the same time, of His omnipotency, in His entering through closed doors and standing suddenly in the midst of the assembled Apostles. Commentators are divided in opinion as to whether St. Thomas, at the invitation of Christ, really touched His body or not. Many think that those proofs of Christ's Divinity sufficed, and that he did not really touch; whilst others, and with greater likelihood, think that he obeyed his Lord, and by this touch his faith was restored and he was cured of his unbelief. Whether, however, he touched and was convinced, or whether he heard the words and saw his Lord only, and so was cured of his unbelief, is immaterial; for without touching he had proofs of the Godhead, and at the same time of the identity of that body of Christ which he saw before him.²

Acts i. 3.

Toletus.

Augustine,
Bede,
Gregory,
Maldonatus,
et alii.Tertullian,
Hilary,
Ambrose,
Cyril, et alii.
Jans. Gaud.

But the words of St. Thomas declare a deep practical truth beyond this, of the perfect humanity and Divinity of Christ. It is not enough for the Christian to believe that the Saviour is Lord and God, unless he believe also that He is his Lord and his God.³ Let, then, the believer in Christ rest satisfied

Ferus.

¹ "Confiteor Te Dominum meum, qui sanguine Tuo et plagis hominem redemisti ac peccato, inferno, mortique dominaris; ac proinde peccato meæ incredulitatis parcis: plagæ enim puri hominis, nisi Dei essent, non possent à peccato liberare. Confiteor Te quoque Deum meum, qui impertiris fidem, justitiam, pacem, et gaudium: profiteor Te Dominum creantem, Deum gubernantem, Dominum ac Deum instaurantem, et bis meum, in via et in patria."—*Salmeron*.

² When afterwards our Blessed Lord spoke of Thomas as having seen Him, *Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed*, these words by no means imply

that Thomas did not touch Him, but only saw Him, since in the same manner Simeon in the Temple speaks of himself as having seen (*εἶδον*, Luke ii. 30) the Lord Christ, when in fact He was lying at that moment in his arms.

³ "Nec dolor nec amor plura eum loqui patiebantur: dolor ex delicto suo, amor ex benignitate Christi, eum meritis ipse esset indignationem. *Dominum* vocat, quem timeat, *Deum* quem amet. Agnoscis tu quidem Christum esse Dominum tuum et Deum tuum; sed necdum ut Dominum aut ut Deum habes. Si Dominus est, cur non timeas offendere? Si Deus est

with no knowledge short of that which teaches him that our Blessed Lord is his Lord and God, who has especially sought him out, and recalled him from his wanderings from his Father's house: that He is his Lord and God, who was incarnate especially for him, who was wounded specifically for his iniquities, who by His death on the cross has redeemed not mankind only, but each individual of the race of Adam, and, by His rising again, has justified every one who has risen with Him.¹

Corn. & Lap.

Let us not forget that the faith of St. Thomas, and his confession of the Divinity of his Lord and Master, were not based on sight, however much they may have been aided by sight. He saw merely the man. He was bidden only to touch the human body of the Saviour, but he confessed and believed in Him who was invisible—not in his Lord only, but in his God.

Ludolph.

2 Cor. v. 7.
Heb. xi. 1, 27.
1 Pet. i. 8.

(29) *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*

Thou hast believed. These words do not mean that St. Thomas believed that it was Christ in His body who stood before him, for this he saw, but that he *believed* that Christ had risen from the dead. He *believed*, not that it was a man who was standing in the midst of the assembled Apostles, for this he saw with his bodily eyes, but that that Man was his God. Again, it is not said, *Thou hast believed* what thou hast seen, for St. Thomas believed far more than this. What he saw were but the proofs of Christ having risen with the same body, and this led him on to the belief and to the confession of our Lord's Divinity. For faith is not commended in this, that we believe what we see and know by our bodily senses, and of which we cannot doubt, but that we yield assent to arguments against the face of which we have nothing reasonable to allege. Now, the evidence of the voice with which our Lord spake, and the sight of Him standing in the midst, and the touch which Christ permitted, only extended to this, that they were manifestations of the truth that it was Christ Himself, in His crucified body, who had been raised from the dead. But these tokens of

Jansen Yp.

Toletus.

Whitby.

cur non amas super omnia?"—*Avancinus*.

¹ "S. Thomas tam ardentem Christi amorem cognoscens, exclamare cœpit, *Dominus meus et Deus meus*, confi-

tendo illum Dominum et Deum; non enim tantus amor in corde humano reperiri poterat, sed corde divino opus erat."—*Aresius*.

Almighty power struck the unbelieving heart of the Apostle, and he confessed far more than his senses revealed to him. He acknowledged, not that Christ was raised from the dead, but that He had risen : that He was not only the same Lord whom he had once followed and loved, but more than this, **Toletus.** that He was his God.¹

And when our Blessed Lord says to Thomas, *Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed*, it does not follow that St. Thomas did not do what he was privileged and bidden to do. The word *seen* seems to include the other senses. Though as we have seen it has been questioned whether or no Thomas did touch the body of Christ, yet it is most probable that he did so—

(1) Because he was bidden by our Blessed Lord so to do, and there is no indication of his not having so done.

(2) The words of St. John, in another place, *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life*, assure us that some did so **1 John i. 1.** touch the person of their Lord.

(3) From the assertion of several early Fathers as to the fact that Thomas did touch the body of his Lord.

Athanasius
ad Epictet.
Epiph. cont.
Origen.
Chrysostom.
Salmeron.

It had been enough, probably, for St. Thomas that he saw the Saviour at this time, but he has made us more confident of the fact of the resurrection of our Blessed Lord's body by the command or permission to touch the flesh of Christ.

And in accepting this confession of St. Thomas, that Christ was at once his God and his Lord, the Saviour stamps with the seal of His own approval the doctrine which His Apostle uttered. Had St. Thomas not spoken that which was true of the nature and person of Christ He would have corrected his misconception, but in accepting this utterance of His Apostle's faith our Blessed Lord confirmed the truth of his confession, that He was both the God and the Lord of **Toletus.** His people.²

¹ "Quid vidit? Carnem duntaxat. Quid confessus est? Super omnia excedens quod oculus ipse conspexit. Nam deitatem ex carnis visione videtur fuisse confessus. Sed nec inspecta etiam incorruptibilis caro ad deitatem præstitit assensum, quamvis dicat Apostolus: *Invisibilia enim Dei a creatura mundi per ea quæ facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur* [Rom. i. 20]. Diversi enim sunt harum Scripturarum sensus. Aliud protinus in mente Thomas aspexit, operante sibi gratia Domini

Salvatoris, unde credulitas in seipso reviviscere cœpit, et altè motus eructavit altissimum verbum. Sed quia in illa carne resurrectionem perfectam illustrata mente cognovit, non humanitatis aut carnis virtuti, sed Deo vivo et vero tribuit."—*Simon de Cassia in Vita Christi*, lib. xiv.

² "Learn thou here first, by Thomas, to desire as well as to doubt: then assemble thyself with His saints upon His day within the doors of His house; and He will then be in the midst: He

Stapleton. *Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* That is, not denying that St. Thomas was blessed in the removal of his unbelief and in his restored faith, but that they are more blessed who, without the evidence of their senses, yet believe in Christ. In these words our Blessed Lord not only consoles us, now that He is withdrawn from our sight, but He declares that our blessedness in believing in Him as our God and our Lord is greater than that which was imparted to Thomas and to the rest of His Apostles. That what seems a diminished privilege, that we cannot see and touch and hold converse with Him, as others did in the days when He dwelt incarnate amongst men, in no wise lessens our blessedness, but that it increases it.¹

Ludolph.

John xxi. 25. (30) *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book :*²

John xxi. 25. These words are true, as we learn in the next chapter, of the signs and miracles wrought by our Blessed Lord in the whole course of His visible life on earth, and hence some have taken these words to refer to the fact that St. John omits to record *many signs* which were preserved in the Gospels of the other Evangelists, and which for that reason

Chrysostom.

will come with *Pax vobis*, to strengthen thy fearful faith ; and He will show thee His hands and His side in His holy sacrament, for that is His body : there mayst thou see with thine eyes and feel with thy hands, presented in the bread, His body, which was broken for thee. And a vessel of His blood which was shed for thee. But put thy hand then, and touch them, and put not thy finger only into them, but receive them into thee : and when thou seest these saving mysteries and feelest the gladsome effect thereof, confess *non solum corpore, tangendo*, that He is *Dominus tuus*, that so was wounded in His humanity and had power to die for thee ; but, attracting faith by thy touch, *corde credendo*, acknowledge, *ore etiam confitendo*, that He is also *Deus tuus* : that had power in His Godhead to rise again for thy justification." — *Wm. Austin's Divine Meditations.*

¹ "Sed diceres : tamen scribitur [Luc. x. 23], *Beati oculi qui vident quæ vos videtis* : hic autem dicitur : *Beati*

qui non viderunt et crediderunt. Respondetur quod visio est duplex, corporalis et spiritualis. Ibi Lucas loquitur de visione spirituali, hic verò Joannes de visione corporali." — *Petrus de Palude.*

² "Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεία. — Hic Joannes finem scribendi prius fecit, deinde tamen adjecit quæ proximo capite continentur." — *Mariana.* "Hic videtur voluisse finem facere scribendi, sed postea, à Spiritu Sancto motus, reliqua addidit vel loquitur de signis quibus resurrectionem Christus confirmavit." — *Emmanuel Sd.* See also Hengstenberg on these two verses. He considers that the main body of St. John's Gospel extends from chap. i. 19 to the end of this chapter : that the first eighteen verses of this Gospel form a prologue, as the last chapter is the epilogue, to the whole. And he remarks the same triple arrangement, of introduction, of the main body of the Epistle, and of the conclusion, in the Book of Revelation.

are not to be found *in this book*, whilst others have supposed him to assert that all the Evangelists necessarily passed over very much that Christ did during the whole period of His earthly mission. Some commentators, however, understand that St. John is here referring to those other appearances of our Blessed Lord after His resurrection, the *signs* which He wrought in attestation of the truth that He had risen from the dead the same Lord and in the same body in which He had been crucified. This latter seems to be the true meaning of these words. The Evangelist is here referring to the demonstration of the truth of the resurrection by the *signs* wrought by Christ in confirmation of this fact. And the circumstance that in the next chapter St. John closes up his record with the declaration that *there are also many other things which Jesus did* which had not been written, would seem to indicate that here he was referring not to the same fact, but specifically to unrecorded *signs* which attested the truth of the resurrection of Christ.¹ And that St. John's words only refer to these latter *signs* is made more probable by the words which he uses. The mighty works which manifested the Divinity of Christ from the time that He wrought His first miracle in Cana of Galilee until His death upon the cross were done in the presence of the multitudes who thronged around Him, and who followed Him for that purpose, that they might see His miracles; but the Evangelist here refers to those things which were done, not before the multitude, but *in the presence of His disciples*—those deeds which, after His resurrection, He wrought not before *all the people*, but in the presence of *witnesses chosen before of God*, even to His own Apostles and disciples.

Rupertus.
Jana. Gaud.Chrysostom.
Euthymius.
Corn. & Iap.
Maldonatus.

Barradius.

John II. 11.

Acts x. 41.
Theophylact.

And these works of Christ have not merely been passed over by St. John, they are not recorded in the writings of any of the other Evangelists. What they have written, indeed, is sufficient for our knowledge, and they have recorded enough for the strengthening of our faith, so that those who are not convinced by these *signs* and tokens of almighty power that Jesus was the very Christ, and that He was what He declared Himself to be, one with the Father, would still remain in their unbelief, however copiously the beloved disciple or the other Evangelists might have related the incidents of Christ's incarnate life.²

Beugel.

John x. 20.

Chrysostom.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

¹ "Ac si diceret, De multis apparitionibus quibus Christus post resurrectionem Suam se vivum ostendit, hæc duo scripsisse sufficiat, quandoquidem in lege scriptum est, *Quod duorum*
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hominum testimonium verum est [Deut. xix. 15]."—Ferus.

² "Multa signa facta in conspectu discipulorum ad resurrectionis argumentum Joannes Evangelista com-
P

Luke i. 4.
John iii. 15,
16, 36;
v. 24.
1 Pet. i. 8, 9.

(31) *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.*

Estius.

John i. 4.
Menochius.

Corn. & Lap.

In these words we have a statement of the final cause of that Gospel which St. John wrote: it was to establish and confirm the truth *that this Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*,¹ so that men *believing* this truth might, *through His name*—that is, through Him, by the merits of His sufferings and death, who is *the Life*—obtain eternal life. 'This, indeed, is not only the scope of this Gospel especially: it is to be the end at which we are to aim in all our preaching, the object which every Christian is called upon to bear in mind in all his actions—the setting forth the glory of God as manifested in the incarnate life of Christ.

And the truths which we are to believe are these—

(1) That Jesus is the Eternal Son of the Father, the Saviour of the world.

(2) That He is the Christ, the Messiah promised to Adam and to Abraham, whose coming was foretold by all the prophets, and was so long expected by the people of God.

(3) That He is not only Very Man, but also the Eternal Son of the Father, Very God.

(4) That He will give to all His faithful members, to all those, that is, who truly believe in *His name*, the blessing of eternal life.

Corn. & Lap.

In this Gospel, then, we have three distinct grounds for man's belief stated:—

(1) That which comes through sight. That which was

memorat, quæ in suo libro scripta denegat esse, sed Evangelistæ alii jam descripserant, et si non omnia, imponitur asserendi silentium similiter et disserendi, ne qui præsumant in Evangelio imponere quod notarii Evangelici non scripserunt. Et quamquam multa alia, tamen non scripta, et si non scripta, explanatio inhibetur, cum pia fides absque periculo possit illa multa sub nube complecti. Sed hæc omnia, quæ de Christo sunt scripta in hoc fine conveniunt, et totius Scripturæ hic est terminus ultimus constitutus, ut credamus, quia Jesus incarnatus, natus, conversatus, passus, mortuus et sepultus, regressus ab inferis, cælumque, conscendens,

est verè Filius Dei. Et credentes non simus immeriti, nec fides sui ipsius ipsa finis, sed vitam habeamus æternam in nomine Ejus, scilicet crediti Jesu, ab æterno Filii Dei, ab æterno pro nobis in tempore filii hominis facti, salutemque sic pœnaliter et strenuè operati, ut salus omnibus, vere credentibus in nomine Ejus, tota et perfecta in æternum proveniat. Argumentis multis erat declaranda hæc novitas, quòd corpus à sepulchro, et quòd anima recessit ab inferis, nec decebat semper delitescere, qui sui notitiam venerat conferre mortalibus."—*Simon de Cassia.*

¹ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἰστίῃ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ. Note the force of the article.

granted by our Blessed Lord to St. Thomas, and by which he was enabled to attain to that higher truth, that Christ was his God and Lord.

(2) That to which some others had attained in the days when the Gospel was written. Those who believed on the testimony of the living witnesses of these truths, and who were blessed in that not seeing they yet believed.

(3) Those who believe through the written Word of God's revelation to man; for to this purpose were the Scriptures written, that men through them might attain to the like unshaken faith as that to which St. Thomas and the rest of the disciples of Christ attained; that men might believe both the humanity and the Divinity of Christ, that the Man Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, co-equal and one with the Eternal Father.¹ Gorranus.

In the incredulity and the recovery of St. Thomas from his unbelief we are taught—

(1) That in God's saints, in His regenerate children, temptation has power to destroy faith, and that none are safe from the assaults of Satan, since without watchfulness and the grace which comes from God every one may fall away. Lampe.

(2) That in his history we may have an example of the readiness of God to restore those who, after grace given, yet fall away.

From this history also, and from other recorded instances of weakness and sin in the Apostles of Christ—the fall of St. Peter and his denial of his Divine Lord, the flight and dispersion of the whole of the Apostles when their Master was seized by the soldiers in the garden, the unbelief of so many of the Apostles, and their blindness to the meaning of Christ's words, as well as in this account of the incredulity of St. Thomas—we may see the integrity of those who were moved to record the history of our Blessed Lord's life. What is most to the disadvantage of the early ministers of the Gospel is yet faithfully recorded, all their weaknesses, their blindness, their unbelief.² Stanhope.

¹ "Quandoquidem dicit beatos qui non vident, et credunt; propterea hæc nos vobis scribimus, ut credatis; et ut credentes, beatam vitam habeatis, quam Jesus annuntiat credentibus in corpore Suo glorioso: et eam habeatis in nomine Ejus: Ipse enim pro nominis Sui gloria illustranda beatæ vitæ gratiam imprimis, ac deinde immortalis vitæ largietur coronam. Propter hoc nomen sanctum Jesum exaudimur, à multis

malis liberamur. Demus ergo operam, ut per nos sanctè viventes ac rectè docentes nomen illud sacrosanctum apud alios indies magis illustretur, ac inclarescat, sitque nomen Jesu benedictum ex hoc nunc et usque in seculum."—*Salmeron.*

² "Agnosco divinæ providentiæ dispositionem singularem, quæ S. Thomæ festum quadriduo præcedit Natalem Dominicum, ut sit Apostolus iste qui-

Finally, on this day, and in this Gospel, the Church calls upon us to celebrate—

(1) The repentance of and the confession of faith uttered by St. Thomas.

(2) The power of God in changing the heart of the incredulous disciple, and making him to be a firm believer of the truth.

(3) The mercy of Christ, who came at this time specially to recover and lead back this one wanderer from the faith.

(4) We are called upon thankfully to acknowledge the abundant testimony to the truth of Christ's resurrection, which has been given to us through the momentary doubt and unbelief of this Apostle.

Matt. Faber.

dam præcursor et diversitor ad præparandum Jesulo diversorium, imò magister morum et instructor, quomodo ad excipiendam incarnatam sapientiam unusquisque disponere sese possit ac debeat. Erudit autem nos erroribus potius suis quam doctrinis et exemplis. Absentia enim Thomæ nos reddit ferventes, ejusdem periculum cautos, per-

tinacia dociles, inconstantia firmos, infidelitas credulos, præcipuè verò eruditissima pessimèque illius tessera: *Dominus meus et Deus meus*, edocet nos ità ab unoquoque nasciturum Jesulum suscipiendum, amplexandum, fovendumque esse, quasi ipsius solummodo Deus, ac Dominus sit."—*Hartung*.

••• "Domine Jesu Christe, qui Thomæ dubitanti loca clavorum et lanceæ ostendisti, et eum per digiti et manus immissionem ab errore revocasti, da mihi ut Tuorum vulnerum et passionis semper habens memoriam, digitum et manum, hoc est quicquid discretionis et operis in me fuerit, totum

in servitium Tuum mittam et expendam, et cum Thoma confitear, quia Tu es Dominus meus, qui me sanguine Tuo comparasti, et Deus meus, qui me creasti, ut quod de credentium salute futura ei prædixisti, in me merear experiri, et Te largiente beatus apud Te inveniri. Amen."—*Ludolph*.

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.¹

ST. MATTHEW XIX. 27—30.

(27) *Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?*

Dent. xxxiii.
9.
Matt. iv. 20.
Mark x. 28.
Luke v. 11;
xviii. 28.

Then—when our Blessed Lord had bidden the young man sell all that he had, to give to the poor, and to follow Him; and when Christ had, upon his going away in sorrow at these conditions, pointed out the danger of riches—*then* Peter asked this question; for this word is used to point out the connexion of his words with what had gone before: and the word which so often occurs in the New Testament, *answered* (ἀποκριθείς), does not necessarily mean that he replied to some question, but rather it indicates that he was pursuing an inquiry arising out of something which had just been said, or occasioned by some incident which had just happened. In this instance it was the coming of the rich young man to Christ, and the command given by Him.

Verses 16 to
26.

Tostatus.

Barradius.
Luca Brug.

We have forsaken all at Thy bidding. It might have been only their nets, yet it was their *all*.² Some commentators suppose that these words of St. Peter had reference to our Blessed Lord's commands to the young man, *Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor*, and that the Apostles were anxious to know what should be their reward who had not sold their goods for this purpose, but had merely

Jana. Gand.
Luca Brug.

¹ "Multifariam à Deo per Christum vocentur. Ille Petrum, Andream, Matthæum, Philippum, ac reliquos Apostolos solo verbo ad Se sequendum vocat: Paulum verò prostratione, cæcitate, tempestate, ac voce querula. Ratio hujus diversitatis occulta manet in pelago illo divinitatis: in quo, ut Paulus et Isaias docent, est altitudo

divitiarum sapientiæ et scientiæ, Ejus, *cujus judicia sunt inscrutabilia et viæ investigabiles* [Rom. xi. 33]."—Spangenberg, *Tabulæ in Evangelia et Epistola*.

² See the Gospel for St. Andrew's Day, St. Matt. iv. 18—22, ante, pp. 186, 187.

Euthymius.

Origen.
Jerome.
Corn. & Lap.
Lyserus.

Jansen Yp.

Th. Aquinas.

John vi. 38.

Avendaño.

Salmeron.

abandoned them when Christ had bidden them follow Him, and that the question, therefore, really was, Since Thou hast promised *treasure in heaven* to those who shall distribute all they have amongst the poor, what shall we have who, though we have not done this, though what we have given up is far less than what he might have given up, yet have *forsaken all* for Thee? This, however, is at best but doubtful, and most commentators understand these words to mean—We have in fact done what Thou hast bidden this young man do, *we have forsaken all*, our homes and our worldly calling, our boats and our nets, all that we possess, and we have *followed Thee*, what, therefore, shall we receive?—what shall be our reward in Thy kingdom? For we must remember that the Apostles at that time, and until the crucifixion of Christ, all looked forward to an earthly kingdom, and to earthly honours in that kingdom.

But they had not only *forsaken all*, they had done so at Christ's command, and in order to follow Him, as He had just commanded the young man to do. In vain, indeed, would they have *forsaken all* that they had, or all that they hoped for in this life, unless it had been to follow Christ.¹ Indeed, he alone truly follows Christ, who to the giving up of earthly desires and possessions adds the giving up of his own will: this, and this alone, is to follow Him who came not to do His own will, but to do the will of Him that sent Him. There can be no virtue in giving up all, ease, pleasure, wealth, and friends, for the attainment of the objects of worldly ambition—the giving up what we have in order to possess some idol of earth. This is not the giving up of which the Apostle speaks, and hence he adds, We have *followed Thee*.² Hence also, in replying to this question of His Apostle, our Blessed Lord passes by that part of it which refers to what they had left, and speaks only of the fact that they had *followed* Him, estimating at nothing what they had *forsaken*, and dwelling only upon the disposition of their mind in so doing. This, indeed, is what is regarded by God in all our actions—the state of the heart from which they proceed; and thus, at the very beginning of the history of the human race, we read, *the Lord had respect unto Abel*

¹ "Quia non sufficit tantum relinquere, jungit quod perfectum est, et secuti sumus te."—S. Hieronymus.

"Relinquere omnia non facit perfectionem sed relinquere omnia et sequi Christum."—Th. Aquinas.

"Nihil proficit omnia reliquisse, nisi Christum sequamur."—Beyerlinck.

² "Non sufficit inchoare bonum relinquendo omnia, sed necesse est illud perficere et consummare, quod fit cum sequimur Christum."—Sylveira. "Non satis sunt recta principia, nisi perfectè consummentur."—Emmanuale ab Incarnatione.

and his offering—to Abel, first, for it was in his heart to sacrifice to God of the best which he had; and because his heart was right in the sight of God, his gift was also accepted.¹

Gen. iv. 4.
Avendaño.

Let him who would truly say with Peter, *Behold, we have forsaken all*, forsake himself; let him go out of himself by giving up his own will, and cleave to nothing save God, on whom all depend, and to whose will it behoves all to submit.

Scarez.

In thus passing by the act of forsaking all for Him, and dwelling only on the latter words of St. Peter, that the Apostle had also *followed* Him, our Blessed Lord, in His promise, leaves an especial word of comfort to the poor. He had first bidden the rich young man sell all that he had. He had commanded him to distribute his riches to the poor, and afterwards to follow Him, and had promised him *treasure in heaven* for so doing; and now, lest the poor members of Christ's Church, who have no worldly riches to give up, should think that this promise is one exclusively to those who can perform acts of earthly sacrifice, and can distribute largely of this world's wealth, and that those who have nothing to offer are therefore less acceptable in God's sight, our Divine Lord, in answer to this question of those who were poor, speaks of the reward which should be given to those who had not such wealth to forsake, but who should follow Him though they might have no earthly goods to surrender. Judged of as the world judges, it was little indeed which most of the Apostles of Christ left when they followed Him. A broken net, a small fishing-boat, their hooks and reeds, and the rest of their fishing-tackle, are things contemptible in the estimation of the world. Little according to the valuation of earth—almost worthless, if we take the standard of the market—much, however, to them, for it was their all. And this they willingly left for the sake of Christ, and at His command; and He who estimated not

Tostatus.

¹ "*Respexit Dominus ad Abel et ad munera ejus; ad Cain autem et ad munera ejus non respexit* [Gen. iv. 4, 5]. Prius excepit Abel, deinde munera ejus; quum id quod prius respicit, facies est animæ, quæ voluntas est. Abel quippe prius cor suum dicavit, deinde munera obtulit; et ideo Deo placuerunt. Cain verò cor suum sibi reliquit et tantum exterius munus Deo præstitit; et ideo repulsam. passus est. Plus tribuit, ait D. Ambrosius, qui arborem simul et fructus quam qui tantum fructus præ-

stat. Arbor et radix omnium operum nostrorum voluntas est; fructus autem sunt opera. Qui ergo voluntatem simul cum operibus offert plus tribuit quam qui opera ac qui munera dumtaxat confert. Magis volo fontem, quam rivos ex illa fluentes. Da mihi fontem, et tibi sint rivi. Da mihi auri minam, et tu accipe glebas. Fons est cor, ac voluntas; hanc Deus Sibi elegit. Sic Dominus per Salomon ait, *Præbe, fili mi, cor tuum mihi.*"—Avendaño.

Mark xii. 41
—44.
Origen.

the value of the gift, but the heart of the giver, and who commended the self-sacrifice of the poor widow in casting in her two mites into the treasury of God, accepted this from His Apostles, since it was the whole of their possessions.¹

Mark i. 20.

Luke v. 29.

Slier.

But though this is true of the greater number of the Apostles of the Saviour, that what they forsook might be of little intrinsic value, yet it would be a mistake for us to imagine that this was so of all. The sons of Zebedee, when they left their father and the *hired servants* in the boat, probably quitted what on the sea of Galilee must have been of ample, if not of considerable, value. And when Levi rose up and followed Christ at His call, we find him possessed of means enabling him to make a *great feast* in his house to celebrate Christ's mercy; and he gave up what we know was a most gainful profession.

Matt. xx. 21.
Luke xxii.
28—30.
1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.
Rev. ii. 26.

(28) *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Luca Brug.

Chrysostom,

Cajetan.

Verily. In thus revealing future things, and making this promise to them, our Blessed Lord, as at other times, confirms His word by this solemn asseveration. *Ye.* Let us note that, unlike the promise contained in the next verse, what He here says is limited to the twelve Apostles, *which have followed Me.* He says nothing here of giving up aught for Him, but only of following Him. In this consists the perfection of Christians, not in giving up their possessions, but in giving them up in order to follow Christ; or rather, in giving up themselves, their wills and affections, to follow Him. This is to be the end of all our actions: to tread in His footsteps.

*In the regeneration.*² Several commentators, placing the stop after the word *regeneration*, instead of after *Me*, have interpreted this passage as a promise to those who had been baptized.³ *Ye which have followed Me in the*

¹ "Multum reliquit, qui sibi nihil retinuit. Multum reliquit qui, quantumlibet parum, totum deseruit." — *Barradius*. "Non ex rerum relictarum quantitate et modo virtutem hanc æstimat Christus, sed ex animo affectuque relinquentium." — *Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

² "The Syriac and Persian versions

render this, 'in the new world;' the Arabic, 'in the generation, or age, to come,' which among the Jews was used to mean the kingdom of the Messiah, the Gospel dispensation." — *Gill*.

³ "Ios qui secuti estis me in regeneratione id est regenerati estis per gratiam." — *Th. Aquinas*.

regeneration, and in that holiness of life which is enjoined upon the baptized, *shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*. But independent of other objections to this interpretation, which is at variance with almost all the best and most ancient commentaries, this promise would be one to the whole body of Christians—all who had been regenerated in baptism—and not to the Apostles especially; whilst it is evident from our Blessed Lord's words that He is promising some privilege which shall be peculiar to the Twelve, for the way in which they followed Christ by being baptized would be that which was common to the whole body of Christians. *In the regeneration*, then, cannot mean, when ye have received the regenerating gifts of the Holy Spirit; nor, what is in effect the same, does it mean in that new dispensation when the souls of men are regenerated by the grace of baptism, and the Christian Church and faith shall have leavened the world.

In the regeneration—that is, at the resurrection,¹ or the last judgment of mankind, when the whole world shall be regenerated, and when there shall be *a new heaven and a new earth*, wherein dwelleth righteousness—then shall the bodies of men rise from their graves, and the flesh itself be renewed; for we shall rise with these bodies glorified and made free from corruption and pain, the original guilt of our nature, and made like the body of our Blessed Lord. The same flesh will be there, but regenerated, glorified, incorruptible; for the regenerating gifts of the Holy Spirit given at our baptism for the renewing of the soul shall then be perfected by the redemption of the body from the power of sin; for as in baptism we receive the regeneration of the soul, in the resurrection we shall receive the regeneration of our bodies. In Holy Scripture, indeed, we read of two regenerations, as there are two different adoptions spoken of, and two resurrections. There is one regeneration of which Christ has said, *Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*. And another, which is here spoken of: *In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones*.² The first adoption is that of

Hilary,
Pseudo-
Chrysostom,
et alii.

Salmeron.

Tostatus.

Arias Mont.

Lightfoot.
Hardouin.
Grotius.

Euthymius.
Menochius.
Rev. xxi. 1.

Augustine,
De Civit.
Dei, xx. 5.
Jerome.
Avendaño.
Lyserus.

Luca Brug.

Cajetan.

John iii. 5.

¹ "The day of judgment is the day of regeneration—'Quia caro nostra ita generabitur per incorruptionem, sicut anima per fidem' [Augustine]—because our body shall be regenerated by glory there as our souls by faith here."—*Donne*.

² As is the cleansing, the purification

of the soul from the defilement of sin by water, so is the regeneration of the world its cleansing at the last by fire. "The selection of the expression *παλιγγενεσία* to denote this, arises from the magnificent idea of drawing a parallel between the whole and the individual. In the passage in Titus

which St. Paul speaks when he says, *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* The second adoption is referred to by the same Apostle, in these words: *We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.* So, also, the first resurrection, the resurrection of the soul from a state of sin, is that of which our Blessed Lord spake: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.* And of which St. John speaks when he says, *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.* The second resurrection is foretold by our Blessed Lord in these words: *The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.* In these two latter cases there is a distinction made between the adoption of the soul and that of the body, and also between the resurrection of the soul from sin and that of the body from the dust of death. There is the same distinction observed with reference to the regeneration of the soul in baptism and that of the body at the general resurrection.

And the resurrection of the body at the last day is fittingly spoken of as a regeneration, for—

(1) As our bodies were made at the first from the dust of the earth, so from corruption and from the same dust of the earth will our bodies rise at the general resurrection.

(2) Because of its resemblance to the spiritual regeneration of the soul in baptism; for as in this sacrament the soul is cleansed from original sin, so at the general resurrection will our bodies rise free from the corruption of sin and from that defilement which they have contracted upon earth.

Matt. Faber.

And at this time—at the resurrection and in the regeneration of all things, *when the Son of man in His incarnate form as man shall sit in the throne of His glory*, you who are now despised by men and in the lowliest state—ye, the

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

iii. 5, baptism (λουτρόν παλιγγενεσίας) appears as the means which brings about the new birth of the individual. That which takes place usually in the individual is transferred to the whole

body, which having been altered by sin, requires and looks forward to a restoration not less than does the separate individual.”—*Olshausen.*

Apostles, *shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*¹ They *shall sit*, that is, shall rest, in ineffable glory, no longer persecuted, but in peace; and on *twelve thrones*, exalted in glory as now abased and despised; and *shall judge*, as members of the body of the Judge of quick and dead, and sharers with Him of that glory into which He has entered. They who are with Him join in His acts, and because He judges they shall join with Him in judging those who then rejected their Master and them, and cast them out of the synagogue; for this word *thrones* implies not pronouncing a sentence, but resting in unspeakable honour and glory, and sharing with the great Head of the Church in that glory and dominion which He shall then manifestly have over all creation. His glory also He imparts, if not in the same degree, yet to all who are His true followers.

Theophylact.
Euthymius.

Euthymius.

Gorranus.

Chrysostom.

Olshausen.

They *shall judge*, that is, they shall condemn,² the twelve tribes who heard their teaching and who rejected the truths which they were commissioned to declare,³ by sitting—

Chrysostom.
Origen.
Euthymius.
Ambrose.

(1) As living witnesses of the truth of that Gospel which they accepted, but which others despised. Thus, on another occasion, our Blessed Lord, in similar words, warned those who attributed His miracles to the power of Beelzebub that their *sons*, these very Apostles of His, who, like themselves, were the *sons* of Abraham, should be their *judges*, and “condemn the nation for its wilful rejection of the Messiah, for its malice against Him, its unbelief, and the inconsistency of its blasphemy.” In the same sense, also, He had declared that the *men of Nineveh* and the *queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it*—that is, by her example; for the one repented at the preaching of Jonas, and the other came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; whilst these rejected a greater than either Jonas or Solomon.

Luke xi. 19.

Commentary
on Third
Sunday in
Lent, in
loco.Matt. xii. 41,
42.

¹ “Alludit Christus ad veterem Israelitici regni statum, in quo tribuum principes proxime ad regiam majestatem accedebant, et in publicis cœtibus juxta ejus solium sedebant in sellis curulibus: vel ad communem morem, quo regi judicanti selecti ab ejus majestate consiliarii assident.”—*Alex. Natalis*. Vide et *Augustinum*, lib. xx. *de Civit. Dei*, cap. 5.

² “Τί δέ ἐστι, ‘κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλάς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ’; τουτ-ἴστι, κατακρίνοντες. Οὐ γὰρ δὴ δικασ-ται μᾶλλον καθιδεῖσθαι ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ

τὴν βασιλίσσαν τοῦ νότου κατακρινεῖν τὴν γενεὰν ἐκείνην ἔφησε, καὶ οἱ Νινευ-ῖται δὲ κατακρινούσιν αὐτούς· οὕτω δὲ καὶ οὗτοι.”—*Chrysostom*.

³ Others, however, understand by the *twelve tribes of Israel* the whole family of the faithful, the Israel of God. “Quid est *super duodecim tribus Israel*? Intelligitur tota plebs fidelium totius mundi; quia intravit gentilitas in pinguedinem olivæ et facta est consors promissionis factæ patribus.”—*Th. Aquinas*.

(2) By the testimony which they shall then bear that they have preached the Gospel throughout the whole country of Judæa, and that those to whom it was preached have turned away from it. Hence it is not said they shall judge all the world, but the *twelve tribes* only—those, that is, who, having the same call of our Blessed Lord, the same privileges, and the same opportunities, yet repented not, and followed not Christ as the Twelve did, and so shall be condemned when the Lord comes in glory with His saints and these His Apostles.

Maldenatus.

Chrysostom.

Ward.

Piscator.

Tostatus.

Lightfoot.

Chrysostom.

(3) By the doctrine which they were commissioned to teach, and which shall be the test by which the Jews and all the world shall be judged at the last day. For Christ shall then pronounce judgment according to that doctrine which the Apostles have preached throughout the world.

They shall then judge, not by pronouncing sentence—for this is the prerogative of Christ alone, to whom all judgment has been reserved and committed by the Father—but by showing forth, in their own persons, the truth and justice of that sentence, as the living witnesses of the reality of that power which would have had all men follow Him, and work righteousness, as they had power to do. In this promise to the twelve Apostles, Christ, in effect, says: When I shall sit in judgment upon this most unjust nation, by whom you are now rejected and hated for My name's sake, then shall your lives, and the doctrine which you have faithfully taught, judge and condemn them.

And this promise is made to those who had followed, and should continue to follow, Him, thus excluding Judas, who fell away from Christ. For to follow Christ implies—

(1) That they had faith in Him, that they believed His words, copied His example, and obeyed His commandments.¹

(2) That this faith of theirs in Him led them to follow Him corporeally, and had moved them to abandon all they possessed or hoped for in this life in order to accompany Him and to be the witnesses of His life and works, and

¹ "Christus à juvene duo expetiit, dare pauperibus quæ habebat et sequi Se. Propter hoc Petrus addidit *et secuti sumus Te*. Sciendum autem, quod licet ista duo Christus præceperit, non præcipiebat ea æqualiter quasi essent æqualiter bona, sed unum propter alterum; sequi enim Se directe tanquam bonum suadebat, dimittere autem omnia non ob aliam causam jubebat; nisi quia possidens adhuc ter-

rena, et illorum curis implicitus Christum sequi non poterat quocumque iret, ideo tanquam dispositio ad sequendum Se fuit venditio omnium, et ideo quando Christus suadebat diviti sequi Ipsum, quod fieri non poterat nisi dimittendo omnia, et principium operis debet esse: ad dispositionem, dixit, *Vade et vende universa*, et subintulit, *Sequere Me* [Luc. xviii. 22]." — *Tostatus*.

nerved them to endure the contempt and persecution of the world for the sake of their Divine Master and that of the Gospel which they declared in His name. Tostatus.

And it is not without significance that our Blessed Lord promises this rest and glory, this seat with Him when He shall judge all the world—*when the Son of man shall sit on His throne*. He says not when the Son of God, but, in order to remind them, amid all the glory and majesty of Godhead, that the humanity is still there, He uses this phrase, *when the Son of man shall sit on His throne*. For this prerogative of judging has been committed to the Eternal Son because of His incarnate life, His precious blood-shedding, suffering, and death upon the cross. Sylvira.

(29) *And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife,¹ or children, or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.* Mark x. 29, 30.
Luke xviii. 29, 30.

In the previous verse our Blessed Lord, in answer to the question of St. Peter, had promised rest and glory, and peculiar honour in the world to come, to His Apostles. Now He turns from these, and declares what shall be the reward, at the last, to those who forsake all and follow Him. Chrysostom.
Maldonatus.

The promise is not to those merely who shall forsake their houses, their moveable or earthly goods, their *brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife*, all earthly affections, and lands,² possession, station, or inheritance, for this has been done from various motives: the promise is only to those who give up all for the sake of Christ. These words cannot, of course, be pressed in their literal meaning, for we shall not receive a *hundredfold* of either houses or wives in this life. Nor, if the words only applied to the life to come, would it be true that we shall receive one such. Earthly houses there will then be none; and of wives, we know that there *they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God*. These words simply mean that they who forsake carnal things for the sake of Christ shall receive spiritual ones, which are incomparably superior. Jerome.

Matt. xxii. 30.
Jerome.

We are called upon to give up houses and lands and earthly relations when these things hinder or prevent our

¹ "Ἡ γυναῖκα—wife. The singular number of this word should be remembered as an argument against polygamy; for those things of which there can be more than one, *houses, mothers,*

brethren, and sisters, are put in the plural number in this passage."—*Bengel*.

² "Ergo qui vult esse in Deum dives non sibi thesaurizet."—*Bede*.

Luca Brug. serving God, or when the maintenance of these blessings
 Hardouin. cause us to break His laws. We forsake *wife or children*
 Euthymius. when we keep unmarried for Christ's sake, and when we re-
 Chrysostom. gard the commands of God and the service of God more
 than pleasing *wife or children*; for by these words it is not
 meant that the marriage tie is to be broken, but that the
 ties of faith are to be dearer to us than all others. To break
 such marriage tie, when once made, is, indeed, forbidden by
 the express words of our Blessed Lord Himself in this very
 chapter, when He said, *What God hath joined together let not*
 Matt. xix. 6. *man put asunder.*¹

Shall receive an hundredfold: that is—

Bede. (1) Shall receive spiritual goods instead of temporal
 Avendaño. possessions; for the former exceed in value a *hundredfold*
 the latter. Those who deny themselves for Christ's sake
 shall possess the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the consolations of
 Divine love, and Christ Himself, who is the Christian's
 highest good, which is better than a hundred houses, or
 brethren, or sisters, or fathers, or mothers, or wives;
 treasures and possessions which shall satisfy and never
 pass away.²

Barradius.
Luca Brug.

(2) They shall receive in that family of Christ, to which
 by baptism they have been admitted, a *hundredfold* of love
 from the great body of the faithful, all of whom are brethren
 and sisters, through their being grafted into the True Vine
 and having received the possession of the common Redeemer,
 and having been adopted into the family and household of
 the One Father. They *shall receive an hundredfold* of content-
 ment and delight and satisfaction even in this world, joys
 which pass not away, which begin indeed in this life, but
 which shall endure throughout the life to come.³

Origen.

Theophylact.

Paulus de
Palacio.

If we would attain to these things, if we would receive
 that which is here promised, and *inherit*, by our right of son-
 ship, this *everlasting life*, which Christ here promises, let us
 remember that nothing is to be so dear to us on earth as to
 hinder the surrender of the will to God nor to conflict with
 our love to Christ.⁴

Luca Brug.

¹ "Qui reliquerit uxorem. Non hoc dixit ut nuptias penitus dividat, sed ut ipsi quoque conjugii præponamus et Ipsum et Evangelium et regnum Dei." — *Jansen Gandavensis*. "Potes relinquere uxorem cum aliam præter tuam non concupiscis: filios cum iis quos habes, vel non habes, contentus es: domum, cum ampliorem et splendidiorem non appetis: agros, cum præter duos vel tres quos habes nullum con-

cupiscis." — *Matt. Faber*. "Omnis affectus carnalis, si salutem noceat, conculcandus est." — *Emmanuale ab Incarnatione*.

² "Centuplum accipiet, id est aliquid quod valet centuplum." — *Th. Aquinas*.

³ "Illud verò centuplum est mentis hilaritas, et animus sua sorte contentus et ditior quam si mille haberet hæreditates." — *Paulus de Palacio*.

⁴ "Qui possède Dieu, retrouve tout

(30) *But many that are first shall be last ; and the last shall be first.*

Matt. xx. 16;
xxi. 31, 32.
Mark x. 31.
Luke xiii. 30.

Many. He says not all, for *some* there are who are *first* in the estimation of the world, who shall yet be amongst the *first* in the kingdom of God.¹ Luca Brug.

We have here the self-blindness of the Jews and its consequences pointed out—their rejection, who were at the *first* God's chosen people, and the calling in of the Gentiles ; so that these words form the connecting link between the promises just uttered to the faithful and the warning about to be spoken in the parable with which the next chapter opens. Lienard. Beausobre.

But these words have not only their historical application ; they were spoken for the comfort of the Apostles, and as a warning lest, notwithstanding their call to follow Christ and their present obedience, they should in the end fall away and lose their reward. They who were then esteemed the *last*, and were regarded as *the offscouring of all things*, are here told that, notwithstanding the judgment of the world, they shall be the *first* in Christ's kingdom of glory. At the same time they are warned that many who are at one time *first* in His kingdom, and who have begun well, shall yet, through not persevering in their calling, and because of yielding to temptation and falling back to the world, lose their privilege and be the *last*, be rejected by Him.² Speedily and terribly were these words fulfilled. Judas, who was one of those whom his Lord had called to follow Him, who had obeyed his Master's call, and to whom a seat in glory was here promised, fell away and was rejected ; whilst, at the crucifixion of the Saviour, the thief who was penitent on account of his past sins, and who believed in Christ, was the *first* received by Him into paradise. 1 Cor. iv. 12. Janes Yp. Forus. Gorranus.

The immediate followers of Christ were reckoned by the world *ἑσχατοί*, the lowest, the meanest of mankind, yet are they the *first* in His kingdom.

But these words have not an historical application only, nor do they merely refer to Christ's Apostles and the *first* followers of our Blessed Lord. They apply to all times : they are true of every period of the Christian Church.

en Lui : c'est un centuple qui surpasse toute espérance."—Quesnel.

¹ Πολλοὶ δὲ ἴσονται πρῶτοι — *but many shall be first.* Note, not οἱ πολλοί, *the many*, which, in the language of the New Testament, stands for *the whole*.

² " Illi qui relinquunt aliquid propter Christum, vel omnia, si negligenter vivunt, habebuntne istud præmium ? Dico quod non, quia imperfecte assumpserunt, et non erunt primi, sed novissimi."—Th. Aquinas.

Wisdom v.
1-8.

Alex. N
1 Cor.

Many who are *first* in the estimation of the world shall be *last*, shall be rejected by Christ, in the world to come; whilst many who are now *last*, who are despised or lightly esteemed by men, shall be *first* in eternal glory. Many who are *first* in the temporal dignities of this world, and in the possession of authority, riches, and power amongst mankind, and are even distinguished by their knowledge of Holy Scripture, and are *first* in the estimation of their brethren because of their apparent sanctity and of their place in the Church of Christ on earth, shall be *last* in the world to come, and be even rejected utterly. *Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*

••• “ Domine Jesu Christe, da mihi misero et indigno quòd propter Te et amorem Tuum, ac propter nomen Tuum glorificandum, divitias, ac delitias, ac pompas, et omnia quæ mundi sunt, necnon et meipsum inter omnia, valeam relinquere, omnibusque exclusis Tibi soli adhærere, et pro modulo meo Te

sequi qualicunque imitatione vivendi, ut Te rectore, Te duce, laqueos et insidias omnium inimicorum meorum visibilium et invisibilium merear evadere, ac præmia quæ relinquentibus omnia et Te sequentibus promisisti misericorditer obtinere. Amen.” —
Ludolph.

THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE,
COMMONLY CALLED THE
PURIFICATION OF SAINT MARY THE VIRGIN.

ST. LUKE II. 22—40.

(22) *And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem, to present Him to the Lord;*

Gen. vii. 12.
Lev. xii. 2—6.

By the law respecting the purification of women after childbirth, the mother was directed to come *unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation* at the end of forty days after the birth of a *man-child*,¹ or at the end of eighty days after the birth of a *maid-child*, that is, on the forty-first or eighty-first day after each birth respectively.² The reading generally received at present is, not *the days of her*, but of their, *purification*; so that the offering was not merely for herself, but for our Blessed Lord also.³ As to the period

Lev. xii. 6.

Lev. xii. 4, 5.

¹ "Forty were the days of the Purification: something there may be in the number. So many days Moses prepared for the receiving of the Law (Exod. xxiv. 18). So many Elijah in his advance to the mount of God (1 Kings xix. 8). So many Christ Himself before He entered upon His office (St. Matt. iv. 2). [So many again did Christ Himself remain upon earth after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven (Acts i. 3).] So many the Church designs for a preparation to Easter, as a purification of our souls and bodies, by prayer and fasting, against our Easter offerings."—*Franks' First Sermon on the Purification.*

² The Jewish Canon on this subject cited by Gill from Maimonides (Hilch.

Mechose Cappara, c. 1, § 5) is, "a lying-in woman does not bring her offering on the fortieth day for a male, nor on the eightieth for a female, but after the sun is set: and she brings her offering on the morrow, which is the forty-first for a male, and the eighty-first for a female: and this is the day of which it is said (Lev. xii. 6), *And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*"

³ On this reading see Whitby's Commentary at this place. The evidence from the best MSS. and the earliest

Lamy.

Greswell.
Wordsworth.

when the purification of the blessed Virgin took place, whether before or after the coming of the wise men from the East, there is a difference of opinion, although almost all the older commentators place the presentation of Christ in the Temple immediately after the visit of the wise men. In accordance with this opinion, Mary and Joseph are supposed to have gone up to Jerusalem with the child, and immediately afterwards—Joseph being warned, in a dream, of the danger impending over the child from the jealousy of Herod—they departed into Egypt. It seems, however, probable that the coming of the wise men took place immediately after the return of the blessed Virgin from Jerusalem. On this matter, however, we can arrive at nothing certain.

Much has been written as to whether the law of purification was binding in the case of our Blessed Lord and of His virgin mother. This question, however, has arisen from neglect of distinguishing between moral and ceremonial defilement. Mother and son both needed purification according to the law. This was an incident of our Lord's humiliation, of His submitting to fulfil all righteousness, for whatever He did, He did not for Himself, but for our sakes. He submitted to every ordinance, not that He might obtain grace for Himself, but for us. Thus He was made man and was circumcised in the flesh, not for Himself, but in order to sanctify us through grace, and that He might thereby give to our nature the true circumcision of the Spirit. So, also, it was for us He was presented to His Father in His earthly temple, that we might learn the lesson of our duty, and might receive strength to present ourselves, both body and spirit, unto God.¹

Athanasius.

This presentation, then, of our Blessed Lord is distinct from and in addition to any part of the rite of purification after childbirth. It is the solemn presentation of the first-born, as belonging specially unto the Lord. And our Saviour having, in His humiliation, stooped to take *upon*

Exod. xiii. 2.
12.
Bengel.

versions in favour of the reading *αὐτῶν* in place of *αὐτῆς* is almost overwhelming. There is, however, another reading, *αὐτοῦ*, instead of *αὐτῆς*, on which *Olshausen* remarks: "With the exception of Cod. D., it has only some Codd. of inferior authority in its favour; still it is a question whether the reading *αὐτοῦ* is not preferable to the common one, *αὐτῶν*."

¹ "Exemplum datur parentibus filios suos templo prius præsentare, quam

mundo: Dei prius docere observare mandata quam sæculi corruptas consuetudines. Et hoc primogenitis etiam divitibus perquam necessarium est, quibus post patris obitum cæteri commendantur fratres. Unigenitus igitur Virginis, unigenitus, in cælo Patri, omnium quæ Deo ab initio sæculi oblata, ut usque in perpetuum offerentur, illi præsentatur gratissima oblatio."—*Soarez*.

Him the form of a servant and to be made under the law, and thus to become obedient to the law for man, with our nature took upon Him all the incidents of that nature, and fulfilled all righteousness.¹ The sin of Adam consisted in this: that he followed his own will rather than the law and the command of God. This was the wound which, by his sin, was inflicted on all us his children—the love of self; the submission to self-will, and the yielding up ourselves to follow our own inclinations. Thus, when Christ came to give us an example, and by the sacramental efficacy of His actions to give us strength to resist sin and self-gratification, He was manifested to us as fulfilling the Father's will, for which He came, fulfilling it for us that He might afford us an example of perfect obedience, and at the same time give us strength to do likewise.

Phil. ii. 7.
Gal. iv. 4.

Salmeron.

Heb. x. 7.
Stella.

Let us, then, learn the lessons which are taught us in this act of our Blessed Lord:—

(1) He was presented unto His Father after circumcision; and thus He teaches us, that if we would present ourselves an offering acceptable to God, we must first prune away and cut off all sinful desires, and present ourselves pure as to our intention in the sight of God.

Gorranus.

(2) In that it was the firstborn son which was to be presented to God—the firstfruits of the marriage of his parents—we are taught that the beginning of our days, the source of our strength, and the first of our desires, are to be offered up and surrendered to God.

Ludolph.

(3) No woman could enter the temple of God, or join in the public service therein, until her offering had been made and her purification acknowledged: thus, as by a lively image, reminding us that none can enter into the New Jerusalem—the temple where God dwells in glory—until he has offered up himself *a living sacrifice* to his Maker, and has purified himself from sin by the blood of the one Sacrifice once offered for the sins of all the world.²

Rom. xii. 1.
Bede.

Salmeron.

¹ “Hoc festum habet tria nomina. Primò dicitur *festum voluntariæ purificationis*, quia Maria licet purificatione non indiguit tamen tempus purificationis observare voluit. Secundò, *festum piæ oblationis*, quia hodie Maria obtulit primogenitum suum. Tertiò dicitur *festum claræ illustrationis*, revera, quia ille hodie visibiliter apparuit, qui sua claritate cælum et terram illuminavit, imò cælis et terris lucem præstat.”—*Petrus de Palude*.

² “Ut aer vento, domus scopis, igne

metalla, ferrum lima, tunicæ aqua, triticum ventilabro, detersione speculum, purgari ac permundari solent: sic animus noster purificari potest, et sanctificari ab omni criminis labe et sorde per ventum Spiritus Sancti ab austro flantis, per scopas humilitatis, per ignem charitatis, per limam correctionis verbi Dei, per aquam tribulationis, per ventilabrum sanctæ meditationis abigentis muscas tentationum et scrupulorum, per detersionem contritionis, per quam anima nostra uti

Exod. xiii. 2;
xxii. 29;
xxxiv. 19.
Numb. iii. 13;
viii. 16, 17;
xviii. 15.

(23) (*As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord ;*)¹

In obedience to this law our Blessed Lord was offered up, since He was, emphatically, *the firstborn*—

Col. i. 15.

(1) He was *the firstborn of every creature*; so that in Him all who are presented to God are offered, and all who are so offered are sanctified by His offering of Himself.

(2) He was the firstborn Son of the Father; the first and only-begotten Son of God.

Boys.

(3) He was the firstborn and only Son of His mother, and for that reason was, at this time, presented in the Temple.

(4) He was the firstborn with reference to those who are grafted into the Church of God—the *firstborn among many brethren*.

Rom. viii. 29.

1 Cor. xv. 20.
Franks.

(5) The firstborn from the dead: *the firstfruits of them that slept*.

In this offering up of Christ, because He was the firstborn, we are taught to offer up the first, the beginning, of all our strength to God. Let us, then, remember to offer—

(1) The firstborn of our works, the best of our labour, for God's service.

(2) The firstborn or beginning of our studies, so that we may commence our daily task remembering our Father's claim, and with an eye to His glory, in this way offering to Him *the best member that we have*.

Ps. cviii. 1.
P. B. Vers.

(3) The firstborn or beginning of our days. Our first waking thoughts should be offered up to Him; for we are bidden to sanctify the moment of rising by our prayers and thanksgivings to Him.²

(4) The firstborn of our time—the flower and spring-time of our age—that so we should offer to God *a living sacrifice* whilst life is yet fresh in us, and before we have given any other master the beginning of our strength.

(5) The firstborn of our children, if fit for His service,

speculum perfectè Deum præsentat, ad Ejusque renovatur imaginem et similitudinem.—*Salmeron*.

¹ "As the tribe of Levi was exempt from this law, it is a clear case that Mary, though allied to Elizabeth, was not of the tribe of Levi, otherwise her firstborn would not have been subject to the law of redemption. 'An Israelite that comes from a priestess, or from a female Levite, is

free, for the thing does not depend on the father, but on the mother, as it is said, *that openeth the womb* in Israel' [Maimonides, Hilch. Bicurim, c. xi. § 10]."—*Gill*.

² "Si orationem operi præmiseris, et surgens è lecto primorum motuum tuorum initia ab oratione dixeris, aditus peccato in animam non patebit."—*S. Ephrem. Serm. de Orando, Opera* i.

should be rendered to Him. Those who do so may well expect a usurious blessing from God upon the rest of their children. Matt. Faber.

(24) *And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.* Lev. xii. 2, 6, 8.

Commentators are divided in opinion as to whether this offering was made for the mother only, or for the mother and newborn child; the majority of them, however, think that the offering was made for both. The law prescribed that the usual offering should be a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering; but in case of inability through poverty to provide a lamb, then that the offering should be two turtles, or two young pigeons.¹ Of these, one was to be offered up in thanksgiving to God for His mercies, and burnt upon His altar; the other was a sin offering, of which a part was to be reserved for the priest.² T. letius.
Yungus.
Lev. xii. 6.
Lev. xii. 8.
Luca Brug.

According to that which is said in the law. Thus does the Holy Spirit honour the Mosaic Law, and thus are we certified against old heresies and against modern revivals of old heresies, that the author of the Law and of the Gospel is one. The Law of Moses provided that every male that openeth the womb—that is, every firstborn son—should be holy to the Lord, and should be presented to the Lord as His due. And in these words which are added, that this was to be done according to that which is said in the law, we see that Joseph and Mary were not content with following what

Hugo de S.
Charo.

¹ “Pulchrè autem omnia hic conveniunt: agno non redimitur, qui post Agnus Dei nominatus est à Joanne dicente, *Ecce Agnus Dei, qui tollit peccata mundi.* Agnum non habet, quem oblatus agni in universa lege præfiguravit. Columba porrò redimitur, super quem in baptismo Spiritus Sanctus in specie columbæ videbitur. Columba, mansuetissima volucris, redimitur, quem in Evangelio audimus dicere, *Discite à Me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde.* Columba, simplicissima volucris, redimitur, qui post discipulis dixit, *Estote prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbæ.*”—Hofmeister.

² The woman who came for purification and the redemption of her “first-

born” son, passing through “the gate of the firstborn,” stood at the gate of Nicanor whilst the incense was kindled on the golden altar. At length one of the officiating priests came to the gate and received what the Talmud calls “the offering of the poor.” When the morning sacrifice was ended the priest again came to her and sprinkled her with the sacrificial blood: and pronounced her cleansed. Her “firstborn” was then redeemed with five shekel of silver, and two benedictions were at the same time pronounced over her, one for the gift to the family of a firstborn son, the other for the redemption [Exod. xiii. 12—15; Numb. iii. 12, 13, 46, 47; xviii. 15, 16.

they took to be the sense or the spirit of the law, but in their obedience yielded assent to *that which is said*.

Bede.

Franks.

So humble was the condition in life of Mary and Joseph that they were unable to offer the lamb as prescribed, but they brought that offering which was a confession of their poverty. He who was rich—yea, riches itself, and the Giver of all riches to men—for our sakes had become thus poor, that for Him was offered the meanest offering, that, as by His humiliation we are exalted, so by His poverty we might be made rich. By thus coming to God's temple and there offering the *pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons*—the offering of lowly poverty—our Blessed Lord dignified poverty to Christians, and sanctified that low estate in which many of His members are placed in this life.

Eetius.

John i. 29,
26.

And yet, though the poverty of the blessed Virgin prevented her from coming to the Temple with the more usual offering, and though she was not able to sacrifice the typical lamb which was prescribed, yet she presented to the Father Him who was the antitype of the sacrifices continually offered up in the Temple—the immaculate Lamb which alone could take away the sin of the world.¹

Isa. xl. 1.
Mark xv. 43.

(25) *And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation² of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.*

Toletus.

Almost all the older commentators agree in the opinion that Simeon was a priest, and in this they are followed by the best of the modern expositors.³ He is represented as a *just and devout* man. As *just* in all human relations; faith-

¹ "Sed quid, fratres, nos offerimus, aut quid retribuimus Illi pro omnibus, quæ retribuit nobis? Ille pro nobis obtulit hostiam pretiosiore quam habuit, nimirum quâ pretiosior esse non potuit. Et nos ergo faciamus quod possumus, optimum quod habemus offerentes Illi, quod sumus utique nosmetipsi. Ille Seipsum obtulit; tu quis es qui teipsum offerre cuncteris? Quis mihi tribuat ut oblationem meam dignetur majestas tanta suscipere? Duo minuta habeo, Domine, corpus et animam dico: utinam hæc Tibi perfectè possim in sacrificium laudis offerre. Bonum enim mihi, longèque gloriosius atque utilius est, ut Tibi

magis offerar, quàm ut deserar mihi ipsi. Nam ad me ipsum anima mea conturbatur, in Te verò exultabit spiritus meus, si Tibi veraciter offeratur." — *S. Bernard in Purif. B. Mariæ*, Serm. iii. § 3.

² Compare ἐλπίς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ (Acts xxviii. 20).

³ See Gill in loco. Mollerus in Homonymoscopia, p. 201. Vorstius Observ. ad Chron. Dav. Gantzii, p. 283. Wolfius, Bibl. Heb. part ii. p. 862. Tillemont, Mem. Ecc. t. 1, p. 424. The name, however, is so common a one among the Jews that all conjectures are doubtful.

ful as to his duty to his neighbour; obedient to the law of charity to his fellow-men;—and not only just, but *devout*; one filled with reverential fear and love to God; religious in all his actions, and faithful in the performance of his duty to God. His heart was filled not only with love to man, but with love to God; for it were impossible to continue, in all his actions, *just* to man, unless he were also *devout* towards God. The one quality cannot permanently exist without the other.¹

Ludolph.

Luca Brug.

Beaux Amis.

Men, in fear or in hope, were at that time expecting the coming of the Great Deliverer. The increasing wickedness of the age, the decline of the Jewish power and nation, as well as the language of the prophets of old, led men to believe that some great change—they knew not what—was impending, and that some great deliverer of that nation—of whom, however, they had but imperfect notions—was about to appear. The greater part of the Jews looked for an earthly *consolation*, a worldly deliverer, one who should restore the political importance of the nation, and add to its glory among surrounding nations. Others, however, had a clearer notion of a Redeemer, and, with Simeon, doubtless many *just and devout* men in Jerusalem were *waiting* with longing expectation *for the consolation of Israel*—for Him, that is, who was *to bind up the broken-hearted*, and to be the Consoler of His people—the Paraclete; for in saying afterwards to His disciples that He would give them *another Comforter*, our Blessed Lord proclaimed that He also was a Comforter—the *consolation of Israel*.²

Hofmeister.

Isa. lxi. 1.

Leign.

John xiv. 16.

¹ Δίκαιος καὶ εὐλαβής.—“In versione Alexandrina εὐλαβής respondet Hebr. מִשְׁפָּחָה Mich. vii. 2, et εὐλαβεῖσθαι verbo מִשְׁפָּחָה Ex. iii. 6; 1 Sam. xviii. 29.”—*Kuinoel*. “Εὐλαβής, vox Lucæ peculiaris; qui bis præterea usurpat, Act. ii. 5, et viii. 2, Hebræorum imitatione, quibus *religiosus* dicitur מִשְׁפָּחָה *timens*, sed plerumque addito *Dei* nomine, ut Esai. i. 10. Atque ita Christiani veteres episcopos quasi peculiari titulo vocabant εὐλαβεστάτους. Cum dixit δίκαιον, *justum*, et εὐλαβή, omnes officiorum partes complexus est.”—*Grotius*. “Δίκαιος denotes the external legal aspect of his life, while εὐλαβής, akin to ὅσιος (i. 75), denotes rather the internal aspect, the disposition towards God; but, of course, in relation to the Old Testament form of piety, since εὐλάβεια is equivalent

to φόβος τοῦ Θεοῦ. His religious life is characterised most definitely by the words προσδεχόμενος παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, akin to προσδεχόμενος λύτρωσιν (v. 38). The latter expression regards the *deliverance* from sin and misery in the appearance of the Messiah, while the former specifies the *consolation* afforded by it. Both are included in the phrase προσδέχεσθαι τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.”—*Olshausen*.

² “Not only gaudium, but consolatio; that is, joy upon sorrow, the most welcome joy. Consolatio non est nisi miserorum, non est nisi gementium et lugentium. *August*. All that were in distress and in debt, all whose souls were in bitterness, had recourse to David, and he became captain over them. Quando multiplicantur lateres venit Moses. When the yoke of their

Dion Carth.
Alex. Nat.

And the Holy Ghost was upon him—not merely, that is, by His essential presence and power in all men, or by the infusion of grace as He is in all those who are in a state of salvation; but whilst Simeon had this guiding, restraining, and sanctifying presence of the Holy Ghost in a high degree as a *just and devout* man, he had the gift of prophecy also.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

The perfection of Simeon's character and of God's gifts to him are expressed in this: that he was *just* to others, that he was *devout* to God, and that, strengthening and fitting his whole soul for this, he had within himself the Holy Spirit, sanctifying him and enabling him to testify of Christ to all others at Jerusalem.

Ps. xvi. 10;
lxxxix. 48.
Heb. xi. 5.

(26) *And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.*

Gill.

The presence of Christ was revealed to Simeon not by a dream, as the wise men were warned; not by an angel, as in the case of Joseph; nor by a voice from God; but by the spiritual enlightenment of his mind, which enabled him to discern *the Lord's Christ* when He was brought into the Temple.

Beaux Amis.

See Gospel
for St.
Thomas'
Day.

To *see* is used here, as in so many other parts of the Old and New Testaments, of that knowledge which comes by any of the senses, or even by faith, but most commonly by the senses. Thus Simeon says afterwards, *I have seen Christ*, not meaning that he merely saw Him, for he held Him at that time in his arms; so, also, our Blessed Lord says to St. Thomas, *Thou hast seen Me*, when He had just bidden him put his finger into the print of the nails, and when the Apostles had not only seen and heard, but had most probably touched Christ's body.

Maldonatus.

The Lord's Christ. The Anointed, that is, of God; the Messiah by the will of God; the Christ of God, since He was Very God of Very God.¹

burden, and the staff of their shoulders, and the rod of their oppressor was heaviest upon them, then comes Christ to them [Isa. ix. 4]. That's the reason, saith Nazianzen, why Christ was born when the Jews were taxed by Augustus Cæsar, *ἵνα παραμυθίσῃται τῆς δουλείας ἡμᾶς*, to sweeten their captivity."—*Brownrigg's first Sermon on Christmas Day.*

gumist called the Messiah of Jehovah, that is, as here, *the Lord's Christ*: then in the Targum, on Isaiah iv. 2, it is said, 'In that time Jehovah's Messiah shall be for joy and for glory;' and on Isaiah xxviii. 5 the paraphrase is, 'At that time the Messiah of the Lord of Hosts shall be for a crown of joy, and for a diadem of praise to the rest of His people.'—*Gill.*

¹ "So the Messiah is by the Tar-

(27) *And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him after the custom of the law,* Matt. iv. 1.

He came by the Spirit—moved, that is, by the Holy Ghost, by whom it was revealed to him that the hour had come in which the promises made of old, by the mouths of the prophets, were to be fulfilled in the coming of Christ. By this same Spirit, who had promised that he should not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ, it was revealed to him that Christ was now at length come to His earthly temple; and, at the same time, as the star in the east led the Magi to the birthplace of the Saviour, so now by some sign, as it would seem, was the Child pointed out and distinguished from all others who were brought into the Temple. Euthymius.
Theophylact.
Dion. Carth.
Corn. & Lap.

The mother of our Blessed Lord and Joseph had come—

(1) To offer the sacrifice required by the law, as a thanksgiving from the mother on the birth of a child.

(2) To present Him before the Lord, *after the custom of the law*, and to pay *five shekels*, the redemption-money, required from the parents of every firstborn son. Numb. xviii.
18.
Toletus.

Not without meaning have we been told that Mary and Joseph came up to the Temple to do *according to the law of Moses*, and to perform that which was prescribed and *written in the law of the Lord*—that the blessed Virgin came to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, and that Simeon came into the Temple at the moment when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law. By this repetition we are emphatically taught that all our thoughts and words and actions are to be conformed to the law of God, and that we are in all things to seek to do not our own will and pleasure, but that which He has, in His law, prescribed to us. Thus has Christ set us an example in conforming in all things to the will of His Father, and to that written and customary law which had been given by the hand of Moses. He was obedient in all things, that we, copying His example and strengthened by His obedience, might also be obedient. ver. 22.
ver. 23.
ver. 24.
ver. 27.
Matt. Faber.

If thou, with Simeon, would touch Jesus and grasp Him with thy hands, strive with all thy strength to have the Holy Spirit for thy Sanctifier and Guide, and come into the temple of God, where thou mayst find Him.² Origen.

¹ "Τὸς γονεῖς, parentes. Non mirum est Josephum hoc nomine appellari, cum etiam socrum et novercam jurisconsulti tradant esse matrum loco: et apud Plautum est mater quæ mam-

mam dedit: et Gen. xxxvii. 35 filiarum nomine apparet nurus comprehendere."—Grotius.

² "In medio templi misericordia est, non in angulo aut diversorio, quia non

(28) *Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,*

Ælfric.

He who took into his arms the humanity of Christ was himself borne in the everlasting arms of the God who was there incarnate.

Athanasius.

In taking Christ into his arms and presenting Him before the throne of the Father, Simeon acted as the priest of God; and then, having done according to the requirement of the law, he *blessed God* for His mercy in permitting His aged servant to see the Messiah; and in thus blessing God he blessed Him who, though then in man's flesh, was at the same time the Eternal God: and, as his words show, he saw and recognised in Him the Most High; the Prince of Peace; the Saviour; the true Light and the glory of His people.¹

**Hugo de S.
Charo.**

**Irenæus, lib.
iii. c. 18.
Euthymius.**

Here, as throughout our Blessed Lord's earthly life, we have the tokens of the mystery of His birth—Very Man and Very God. Now, whilst submitting to the requirement of the law and observing that which had been imposed upon man by reason of his sins, we have, at the same time, the evidences of His own sinlessness, consequently His freedom from the obligations of the law, and the assurance therefore that He submitted to all these ritual and ceremonial observances not for Himself, but for us. It became Him to *fulfil all righteousness*—not that He needed it for Himself, but for His brethren in the flesh. Thus at His circumcision, by which rite separation from sin and the purging away of fleshly lusts was typified, He was declared to be Jesus the Saviour, who should deliver His people from their sins, and who, therefore, was Himself free from sin. At His baptism, when He descended into Jordan where others were being baptized after the confession of their sins—lest it should be supposed that He also was tainted with sin, and that He required this baptism for Himself, and did not merely submit

Matt. iii. 15.

Luke ii. 21.

est acceptio personarum apud Deum [Rom. ii. 11]. In communi posita est, offertur omnibus, et nemo illius expers nisi qui renuit. Derivantur aquæ Tuæ foras, Domine Deus, nihilominus tamen fons Tuus Tibi proprius est, et non bibit alienus ex eo. Qui Tuus est, non videbit mortem donec viderit Christum Domini, ut securus dimittatur in pace. Quidni dimittatur in pace, qui Christum Domini habet in pectore? *Ipsæ enim est pax nostra* [Ephes. ii. 14], qui per fidem habitat

in cordibus nostris."—*S. Bernard. Primus Serm. in Purificatione B. Mariæ.*

¹ "Mali sacerdotes Christum manibus accipiunt, at Deum minimè benedicunt, ingrati gratiæ Dei. Tanta est, tamque impudens ac temeraria ingratorum sacerdotum audacia. Verùm isti non vident quid in manibus accipiant, dum sacrificium conficiunt: nam si viderent, gratias agerent procul dubio."—*Salmeron.*

to it in order to sanctify baptism and to make it effectual for our cleansing from sin—the Holy Spirit proclaimed Him the beloved Son of the Father; whilst John asked, in wonder, why He, who needed no baptism, should come to him for this purpose. On the cross—when His sufferings and agonizing cry manifested the reality of His human nature, and when He endured that death which sin brought at first into the world—then the centurion was moved to testify that He was indeed the Son of God. So also here, when He submitted to the law, and when He was offered up in the Temple, like the rest of the firstborn amongst the Jews, the aged Simeon, moved by the Holy Ghost, took Him into his arms and declared Him to be the Christ, the Messiah, the Light of the Gentiles, the Saviour of the world, and the Glory of Israel.

Matt. III. 17.

Matt. III. 14.

Rom. vi. 23.

Matt. xxvii.
54.

Salmeron.

What a blessing this taking Christ into his arms¹ must have been to faithful Simeon, we may imagine when we remember that she who merely touched the hem of our Lord's garment in faith was at once made whole of her infirmities, and was released from the bondage of sin. Great, then, must have been that blessing which was given to him who took the Saviour of the world into his arms, and in the fulness of faith saw in Him the Redeemer of mankind, and made this confession of his belief in the Messiah, God and Man.

Origen.

(29) *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word:*²

Gen. xvi. 30.
Phil. i. 23.

Now—since by the coming of Christ the power and fear of death are taken away from the servants and sons of God, and they may now meet death in peace, in full assurance of the love and mercy of their Father. And the *Thou* of Simeon is emphatic. It was God who had sustained His aged servant unto this moment—who had promised that he

Stella.

¹ "Fimbriam vestimenti Jesu mulier tetigit et sanata est. Si illa ad extremam partem vestimenti tantum emolumenti habuit, quid putandum est Simeone, qui in suas ulnas accepit infantem, et brachiis tenens lætabatur, atque gaudebat videns parvulum à se gestari, qui ad vinctos venerat resolvendos?"—*Origen, Hom. xv. in Lucam.*

² "Ecclesia quotidie in Completorio sub vesperam hunc Simeonis hymnum decantat duabus de causis. Prior est,

ut fideles, ac præsertim sacerdotes ecclesiasticos, moneat cogitare de morte, itaque vivere ac si vespere essent morituri. Posterior, ut moneat eosdem induere desiderium Simeonis, scilicet transeundi ex hac vanitate et vitæ hujus ærumnis ad veram beatamque vitam in cœlis, ut quotidie hunc hymnum recitantes postulemus à Deo dimitti, dicamusque cum Paulo, *Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo, Phil. i. 23.*" —*Corn à Lapide.*

Ps. lxxviii. 20.

Maldonatus.

should see Christ in the flesh. It is He who must *now* let him depart, since in His hand alone are the issues of life and death. To whom, indeed, these words were addressed by Simeon is not evident—whether consciously to the Babe then in his arms, who was his Lord, or to the Almighty Father.

And *now*, when, according to the promise of God to His aged servant,¹ he had seen with his bodily eyes the Lord Christ—*now*, when that which he had waited and longed for was brought to pass—his prayer is that he may be allowed to *depart in peace* out of the prison of this body, that he might ever be with Christ, whom then he saw and was permitted to hold in his arms.²

Theophylact.

John xvi. 33.

(1) *In peace*, since all anxieties and the tumult of longing expectation were at an end; and in Christ, and the presence of Christ in the flesh, he and the people of Israel had obtained that peace which they longed for—however much, through blindness, the nation failed to see the Messiah in that Deliverer whom Simeon recognised as his Saviour and his *peace*.

Ephes. ii. 14.

Luke ii. 14.

Euthymius.

(2) *In peace*, because he could no longer fear death, since the Deliverer from death had come into this world; for Christ is emphatically the *peace* of His people, whose very birth was declared by angels from heaven to be the occasion of *peace toward men*.

(3) *In peace*—for there was no longer to be war and conflict between the flesh and the spirit, for he held his Saviour in his arms, and his whole heart was filled with joy at the coming of the promised Redeemer of mankind into the world.

Cyprian de
Mortalitate.

Gorranus.

(4) And yet not in peace, *in pace*, merely, but *in pacem*, into the kingdom of peace, of rest, and of glory.³

According to Thy word, that I should not depart from this world until with the eyes of the body I had seen the Messiah. *Now*, then, that Thou hast in Him given me assurance that I shall enjoy all that Thou hast promised of redemption and

¹ Note the use of the word *δεσπότης*, instead of the usual *κύριος*: God viewed as a ruler rather than a possessor, and Simeon as one bound to servitude—which, as a priest, he emphatically was.

² “*Nunc cum vitam habeo in manibus, nunc cum video Te syncerum Lumen oculorum meorum, quem videre vita est, quem amplecti salus est, quem dissuaviari paradisi est: Nunc dimittis. Dimittis: optat non mori, quia*

ad Jesu præsentiam mors non sentitur, angustia non curatur, sed tantum vita expetitur. *Dimittis: optat velut reus ex carcere, sicut avis ex caveola.*”—*Hartung*.

³ “*Qui vult dimitti, veniat in templum, veniat in Hierusalem, expectet Christum Domini, accipiat in manibus Verbum Dei, complectatur quibusdam suæ fidei brachiis. Tunc dimittetur, ut non videat mortem, qui viderit vitam.*”—*Ambrose*.

resurrection and glory, *now* I am ready to depart *according to Thy word*, who has promised, *My word . . . that goeth forth out of My mouth . . . shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

Beaux Amis.
Bonaven-
tura.

Isa. lv. 11.

(30) *For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,*¹

Ps. xcvi. 2.
Isa. lli. 10.
Matt. lli. 16.

In Simeon seemed to have been fulfilled the promise made by the mouth of the Psalmist, *With length of days will I satisfy him, and shew him My salvation.* And this use of the word *salvation* by David is a key to its use by Simeon. It is not merely in the abstract, *mine eyes have seen the salvation* or redemption which God had promised to the fallen race of Adam, but the word bears a concrete meaning. Simeon rejoiced because his eyes had seen the Salvation, the Saviour Christ, through whom His Father had promised redemption; He who had brought salvation to sinners.

Theophylact.
Ps. xci. 16.

Basil in
Ps. lxi.
Augustine.
Coru. & Lap.

And the cause of rejoicing to this aged servant of God was not his having seen Christ only with his outward *eyes*, as others did when the infant Jesus was brought into the Temple, nor in his seeing Christ merely with the eye of faith, as those kings and prophets who desired to see Christ's day, and who, believing in Him, saw it from afar. His was the blessedness of seeing Christ with the outward *eyes*, and at the same time of seeing Him with the eye of the spirit. With the *eyes* of the body he saw the Infant who lay in his arms, he beheld the humanity of Christ; with the eye of faith he penetrated beyond this, and saw in Him his salvation, his Saviour,² the Eternal Son.

Salmeron.

Ludolph.

(31) *Which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people;*

Which Thou hast prepared; not which Thou preparest—although by the act of incarnation, and by the presentation in the Temple, Christ was being, at that moment, prepared to be made known to the nations of the world—but *which Thou hast prepared* of old, from the moment of Adam's

¹ “ ‘Drihten, þu forlætst me nu on sibbe of ðysum life, forðon þe mīne eagan habbað gesewen ðinne Halwenda.’ Se Halwenda þe he embe spræc is ure Hælend Crist, seðe com to gehælenne ure wunda, þæt sindon ure synna.”—*Ælfric's Homilies*.

² “Τὸ σωτήριον. Something more than τὴν σωτηρίαν: it is used fre-

quently by the LXX. for שׁוּבָה and יְשׁוּעָה; *salutare*, and even for the Divine name of Jehovah Himself,—Isa. xxxviii. 11, Οὐκ ἔτι μὴ ἴδω τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ, οὐκ ἔτι μὴ ἴδω τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐπὶ γῆς, when the original was twice יְהוָה, i. e. Jehovah.”—*Wordsworth*.

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Stella.

transgression; which Thou hast not as yet made known to men, but *hast prepared* in order that not the people of Jerusalem and of Judæa only, but that all people and nations may see and know their Saviour, who now, by His incarnation, has been revealed to all.¹

Dion. Carth.

And this Saviour, this Salvation, which had been prepared from the times of old, was not to be the Guide, the Leader, and the Hope merely of God's chosen people, the Jews. It was not a Messiah whose mission was to be confined to this one nation, and who was to deliver them alone. The wall of partition was now to be broken down—the purposes of God in setting apart the family of Abraham were now accomplished—and the Saviour who had just been born, and who now was held in the arms of Simeon, was One *prepared before the face of all people*, to be seen of all, to be believed in by all, and to be the Redeemer of all;—one in whose incarnation was fulfilled the prophecy uttered of old, *I will have mercy upon her who had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not My people, Thou art My people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.*

Hofmeister.

Hosea ii. 23.

Isa. ix. 2;
xlii. 6;
xlii. 13;
xlix. 6;
lx. 3.
Matt. iv. 16.
Acts xiii. 47;
xxviii. 28.

(32) *A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.*

Hugo de S.
Charo.

But Christ is not only *salvation*—a Saviour who heals the wounds caused by sin, and who binds up the bruises of iniquity—He is also the Light to all mankind, the Enlightener of the nations.

Our Blessed Lord is spoken of as the *light* of the Gentiles and as the *glory* of Israel.

John i. 9.

(1) He was this with reference to what He did. Thick darkness had settled over the hearts of those nations which had lost the knowledge once possessed by all the world of the true God. He came as *the true Light*, to reveal the truths hidden by this thick moral darkness, and to enable the Gentiles to see those truths which concern their salvation.² He came also as *the glory* which should light up the gloom

¹ “*Parasti*. Non dixit, posuisti, sed *parasti*, quia paratus erat, ut poneretur postea ante faciem omnium populorum in cruce, ut ab omnibus cognosceretur. Quemadmodum Heli non poterat videre lucem, donec extingueretur [1 Sam. ii. 3], sic nec Christus cognitus est à mundo, donec per mortem extinctus est in cruce.”—*Stella*.

² “Lumen gentium et mentium Jesus, qui illuminat omnem hominem

venientem in hunc mundum, illum cumprimis, qui cordis oculos spontè non claudit, nec tenebras plus luce diligit, quin potius divinissimum hoc lumen in cor suum per devotam synaxim admittit, et in manibus suis per bonorum operum exercitium et exempla lucis gestare nunquam omittit.”—*Hartung*.

See Sermon on Epiphany by J. H. Newinan. Sermons, vol. ii.

and drive away the darkness which had gathered even over the spiritual sight of His chosen people. The Gentiles had lost almost all trace of the true God—theirs was *gross darkness*, which might be felt; and He came to remove this, and to manifest Himself the True Light of all mankind. The Jews had the knowledge of God, but though, intellectually, they were not shrouded by such a darkness as that which covered the nations around, through their sins and hard-heartedness and formalism they had obscured much of spiritual truth, they were wandering in moral darkness which He came with His glory to remove from the minds of men. Isa. lx. 2.
Eckius.

(2) He was this with reference to Himself. He was a Light revealing to the Gentiles the truths of God, and penetrating their hearts by His brightness, so that they might see their own sinfulness, and might turn from their blindness to Him *the true Light*. Hence, when the Almighty Father called the Gentiles to the cradle of *the true Light*, He typified the nature of the infant Christ, and the effect of His doctrines, by sending to them a star to guide them on their way to Him. For though the Jews had darkened their minds by their sins, yet, compared with the thick darkness which covered the face of the whole Gentile world, their state was one of light. This child, again, was *the glory* of the Jews,¹ conferring honour and *glory* upon them, inasmuch as when He came on earth He condescended to be born of the seed of Abraham; for it was the distinguishing glory of this people that from them should the light go forth which should chase away darkness from the surrounding nations. This glory was recognised by those most hostile to them, and from Christ's own words it is evident that even the Samaritans acknowledged that *salvation is of the Jews*. Bengel.
Stella.
Hofmeister.
Theophylact.
Bruno.
John iv. 22.

As light scatters darkness, so also the love and faith of Christ scatters all vice and sin, all moral darkness, from man's heart, and He thus becomes the glory and the bliss of all believing souls, the true Israel of God, *their light and their glory*. Alfrie.

The *glory* here spoken of is greater than mere *light*, implying—

(1) That there was to be some peculiar privilege attaching to the nation of the Jews in the coming of Christ. He was born among them.

¹ "Gloria plebis Israel fuit dominus Jesus Christus, quia illis promissus est in lege et prophetis, et ipsis, sicut promiserat, ostendit Se incarnatum, et de illis elegit matrem et apostolos, et

inter illos multa miracula patravit, illis etiam videntibus alta cœlorum penetravit. Hæc fuit gloria illorum, hæc est laus et exultatio."—*Haymo*.

(2) He lived and died in Judæa, performing His miracles and teaching throughout that country.

(3) Here He founded His Church, which was to be the glory of all lands; so that Jerusalem became the mother of all Christian people. Here, also, He called and set apart His first Apostles.

Corn. & Lap.

(4) Here He justified His people by His resurrection from the dead, and from this country He ascended into heaven, from whence He sent to the Apostles chosen from amongst that people the first gifts of the Spirit for the healing of all nations.

Leigh.
Rom. xi. 25.

The light of the Gentiles is spoken of first, and afterwards the glory of Israel. In this there may be a reference to the fact that the second calling in, and conversion of, the Jews from their unbelief and separation from the Church of God, will not be until *the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*.

In four names expressive of the attributes of our Blessed Lord does Simeon magnify Christ—

(1) That He is *Peace*, the Giver of all true peace, who, by reconciling sinning man to God, has made peace in His own Person.

(2) That He is *Salvation*, the Redeemer and the Healer of man from the slavery of Satan and the wounds inflicted in his nature by sin.

John i. 9.

(3) That He is *Light*, the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and the light bringing joy and peace to all who believe.

Ludolph.

(4) That He is *Glory* to the children of Israel, the glory of His faithful people, all the true servants of God, who shall be led by His *glory* here and share in the unspeakable *glory* of the New Jerusalem hereafter.¹

(33) *And Joseph and His mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of Him.*

Beaux Amis.

In a previous verse Joseph and Mary had been spoken of as His parents, whereas only Mary was His earthly parent. According to the Jewish law, he was reckoned the father of a child by whom that child had been adopted. But in this case it is more than adoption, since Joseph was the betrothed

¹ "Christus laudatur in hoc cantic. ut Pax, ut Salus, ut Lux, ut Gloria. Pax est quia mediator, Salus quia redemptor, Lux quia doctor, Gloria quia præmiator. Et in his quatuor consistit perfecta Christi commendatio

et magnificentia. Imò totius Evangelicæ historiæ quædam brevissima comprehensio quantum ad Incarnationem in pace, Prædicationem in luce, Redemptionem in salute, Resurrectionem in gloria."—*Bonaventura*.

husband of Mary, and, by the same law, her child would be esteemed the child of Joseph. Augustine.

They marvelled—

(1) As men do at that which is in itself marvellous and a source of admiration. These words do not imply that they did not recognise in the Child the promised Messiah, though they seem to have had a less clear perception of His mission than Simeon had. Toletus.

(2) *They marvelled* at that which was beyond the reach of their imagination—that He was not merely to be the Messiah of the Jews, but that He came to be the Deliverer of the Gentiles also. They seem to have had the same contracted notion of the Messiah which possessed the minds of the rest of their nation. They *marvelled* that He was not to be the Messiah of all the nation, and should even be an occasion of falling to many of the children of Abraham: they *marvelled*, at the same time, that He should be the Saviour not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles—a truth which was revealed to Simeon by the Holy Spirit. Luca Brug.

(34) *And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;* Isa. viii. 14,
18.
Hos. xiv. 9.
Matt. xxi. 44.
John iii. 20;
ix. 39.
Acts xxviii.
22.

As a priest he *blessed them*—that is, Mary and Joseph. Some commentators have supposed that this blessing was merely that of an aged and holy servant of God; but the only ground alleged for this opinion is the negative one that Simeon is not expressly called a priest by St. Luke.¹ His presence, however, in the Temple, and his public action at this time, when, in accordance with the law, our Blessed Lord was presented by His parents, leave little room for doubt that Simeon was one of those faithful priests who waited in hope and expectation for the coming of Christ. And by addressing Mary in these words, and not both the Rom. ix. 33.
1 Cor. i. 23.
2 Cor. ii. 16.
1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.
Maldonatus.

Theophylact,
Euthymius,
Barradius,
Corn. à Lap.
et alii
Athanasius,
De Com.
Essent.
Pat. et Fil.
Cyril,
Hieros.
Epiphanius,

¹ "Accepit Simeon Christum à parentibus: non est autem causa ulla cur acceperit, nisi quia sacerdoti offerebatur puer, qui nomine Dei Eum accipiebat, et donec redimebatur, non reddebat parentibus. Secundo, quia benedixit parentibus, quod eum fuisse sacerdotem indicat. Tertio, quia dicitur, cum inducerent parentes ut facerent secundum consuetudinem legis pro Eo, Simeon accipit Eum. Non erat

autem dicendum sic, nisi fuisset sacerdos, cum quo peragebatur legis consuetudo: dicendum enim erat, postquam fecerunt secundum consuetudinem legis pro Eo. Scio non esse argumenta hæc demonstrativa: sunt tamen multum probabilia, et accedente tantorum patrum testimonio efficacia ad persuadendum fuisse illum sacerdotem; nec argumentum in contrarium alicujus est roboris."—*Toletus.*

Lyra,
Dion. Carth.
Cassian,
Ludolph,
Toletus,
Cajetan,
et alii.
Theophylact.
Luca Brug.
Corn. & Lap.

parents, it would seem as though he knew of the mystery of His birth, that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost. It may, however, be that Simeon did so because he foresaw that Joseph would die before the crucifixion of our Blessed Lord, the time when, as a sign, He should be rejected and *spoken against*.

Greg. Nyss.

This Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel. The fall here spoken of is that of those who, scandalized at the lowliness of His birth and the manifest tokens of His humility, should reject their Lord. The rising is of those who, acknowledging their sin and believing in the truth of God's promises, repent, and confess not only the truth of His human nature, but also the glory of His Divinity. And in accordance with this, Simeon does not speak of Christ as Mary's child; he says not thy child, but *this Child*, who is not thine only, but the Son of God, even whilst the Son of man.¹

Sylveira.

1 Sam. ii. 7.

Isa. viii. 14.

1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

This effect of our Blessed Lord's incarnation, that it shall be for *the fall and rising again of many*, is in accordance with what we are told of His nature as God. *The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich: He bringeth low and lifteth up. He shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. Unto you which believe He is precious: but unto them which be disobedient . . . a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient.* And this rise and falling is of *many*. Many shall fall away and deepen their sin through rejecting Him and the salvation which He offers. The *fall* of those who know the commandments of God and refuse to obey the call of the Saviour will be greater than that of those who lived before the coming of Christ.² Many, again, shall rise from their sin through their belief in Him. Man's own choice and freewill are here manifested. Christ came to be a light unto the nations, not to many, but to all; but though His Gospel is declared to all, and though His call of love is to all, yet it will be rejected by *many*; it will be accepted not by all, but by *many* only.³ These words are true throughout all time,

Greg. Nyss.

¹ Ἰδοὺ οὗτος κεῖται. "Hic: non ait determinatè, hic filius tuus, ô Virgo, hic infans, hic Deus, sed absolutè Hic, qui omnibus est omnia, nempe Deus, homo, redemptor, et glorificator." — Sylveira.

² "Sumus Dei dono Christiani, sumus fideles, plerique etiam ministri Dei, sacerdotes, legis divinæ interpretes: at his tantis bonis si abutimur,

gravior multo nobis impendat vindicta: malo nostro ne sapiamus, tempestivè providendum est. Quam multis in minam fuit qui esse in salutem debuit, status altior atque sacratior; quam multi scientia et gradu eminentes, quod altos docebant, negligentes in se, infinitum barathrum invenerunt." — Acosta.

³ See Commentary on Gospel for St. James' Day, at verse 28.

and are applicable to all men, and not only to those who should fall into sin and deepen their previous guilt by rejecting, persecuting, and finally crucifying Him, but to those who should repent of this their sin, and should rise, by the power of His resurrection, from their sins, and find mercy by His blood, which they had freely shed.¹ Barradius.

These words, then, have their twofold meaning:—

(1) They speak of the moral ruin and fall into sin of those who hear their Lord's call, and yet harden their heart and reject Him. For when sinners turn a deaf ear to the invitation of Christ they fall into deeper sin, and so increase their condemnation. When, on the other hand, men rise from sin, they do so through the grace given to them by Him who rose from the dead for their justification. It is the same Saviour, the same salvation offered, the same call of mercy; yet to those who obey, it is that which raises them from their lost estate; to those who reject it, it is the cause of their deeper fall.² Ambrose,
Lienard.
Maldonatus.
Theophylact.

(2) They were words of warning of the political ruin and fall of the nation of the Jews through rejecting the Messiah, and of the calling in of the Gentiles, and of their resurrection from the dust into which they had sunk. Greg. Nyss.

But our Blessed Lord is also *a sign which shall be spoken against*.

His life, His doctrine, His death, one long *sign* and miracle of almighty power and love, was to be *spoken against* by incredulous Jews, by scoffing Gentiles, and by many Christians, both with their tongues and by the inconsistency and evil of their lives. He was, and continues to be, the *sign*, or mark, against which the railing of the unbeliever and the reasoning of the wise men of this world would be directed—the *sign* of the mercifulness and surety of that covenant between God and man which was ratified by the hypostatic union of the natures of God and man in the one person of Christ. His cross, the *sign* of man's redemption, was an offence from the first to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks. He was the true bow in the Euthymius.
Tirinus.
1 Cor. i. 20.

¹ "Ruit superbia ex Ejus humilitate. Ruit avaritia ex Ejus paupertate. Ruit luxuria in Ejus castitate. Ruit invidia in Ejus benignitate. Ruit gula in Ejus sobrietate. Ruit ira in Ejus patientia. Ruit acedia in Ejus labore et vigilia. Et sic Christus, construendo regnum virtutum, destruxit regnum vitiorum; ita quod eisdem venerit in ruinam et resurrectionem."—*Ludolph*.

² "Sicut palato non sano pœna est panis qui sano suavis est; et sicut oculis ægris odiosa est lux quæ puris est amabilis; et sicut Apostoli aliis sunt odor vitæ in vitam, aliis verò odor mortis in mortem; ita et Christus aliis ad resurrectionem, aliis verò ad ruinam et perditionem facit. Credientibus bene, incredulis autem male fit per Christum."—*Hofmeister*.

Dion. Carth.
Ludolph.

cloud, the *sign* of the covenant from God to man: He was the Healer of all who looked to Him, of whom the brazen serpent in the wilderness was a type, full of grace and truth, and yet was He ever to *be spoken against*.¹ In many ways was He this *sign* :—

Tertullian,
De Carne
Christi.
Isa. vii. 14.

(1) His birth of a pure virgin was the *sign* given by God to men. *The Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.*

Euthymius.
Beaux Ains.

(2) His nature as God incarnate, Very God and Very Man, has been the *sign* of God's love to man, and yet also that which has been *spoken against* by the reasoners of this world from the moment of His birth in Bethlehem.

Tit. Bostra.
Chrysostom.
1 Cor. i. 23.

(3) His crucifixion, in which He manifested the greatness of His love to us, was *unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.*

Origen.
Corn. à Lap.

(4) His whole life, His miracles, the signs of His almighty power, the evidences of His humanity, and His likeness to us, have been always the objects at which the shafts of early heretics and of modern unbelievers have been directed.

Maldonatus.
Heb. xii. 3.

The very tokens of His great love, His laying aside the glory of the Godhead and shrouding and veiling Himself in mortal flesh, and humbling Himself for us sinners, have caused Him to be the *sign* against which all archers have bent the bow and directed their arrows—the mark against which sinners, for whom He stooped to man's nature, have at all times railed. And this *contradiction of sinners* against Christ commenced with His birth; when Herod madly attempted to slay Him whose rule he feared.²

Salmeron.

When, then, the members of Christ's body, when Christians who bear His name, suffer from the tongues or the hands of their brother men, let them remember that in this they do but share in the sufferings of their Lord. More especially let the ministers of Christ not be disheartened if, whilst manifesting Him to others by their life and ministry, they are despised and rejected by the mass of mankind, since in this they do but tread in the footsteps of their Divine Master, who has said, *The servant is not greater*

Alex. Nat.

¹ "Græca litera habet de præsenti ἀντιλεγόμενον—id est, cui contradicatur—et sic legit Origenes, Augustinus; et Tertullian, lib. de carne Christi, signum, legit, contradicibile: et sic exigit consequentia textus, qui de præsenti dicitur, *Ecce Hic positus est*; non ait erit, vel fuit, sed *est*; quod significetur signum contradictioni obnoxium et contradictionis illi factæ perpetuitas."—

Salmeron. Vide et Jansen. Gandavensem. St. Cyril of Alexandria also throughout his commentary on the passage makes use of the present tense. See the Syriac text of this Father, ed. R. Payne Smith.

² "Exemplo Mariæ, quum blasphematur Christus aut veritas fidei Christianæ, acerbissimè id ferre debemus."—*Piscator*.

than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. John xv. 20.

(35) (*Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,*) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. Ps. xlii. 10.
John xix. 25.

The connexion of these words with the previous sentence is, *This Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be spoken against*, so that it will thus be known who are the true servants of God, for by this shall the thoughts of many hearts be revealed. Maldonatus.

*Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also:*¹—

(1) These words soon began to be fulfilled, and anxious fear like a sword pierced the soul of the blessed Virgin, when in fear of Herod, who sought the young child's life, she fled in haste from Bethlehem. Again was she troubled in soul when, in alarm at the reign of Archelaus, she, with Joseph and the young child, took shelter in Nazareth. Hofmeister.

(2) That contradiction and wounding which Christ was to suffer should reach even to the blessed Virgin, so that the sword, the bitter blasphemous words levelled against Christ, should pierce also her bosom.² The denial that He was the Son of the Most High was an insult and a reproach to His virgin mother. Barradius.

(3) The pain which she felt at the knowledge and sight of His rejection by men, and especially those sufferings of His on the cross, which His mother witnessed, were a sword piercing her very soul. And this was made more bitter to her because of that temptation by which she was tried, and to which, for a time, she seems to have yielded when she doubted and hesitated as to the mission of her Son; her faith seemed to have been unable to comprehend the full greatness of His work and to believe wholly in Him—a state of mind which made the sufferings of Christ to be a deeper grief to her than if she had fully been assured of the certainty of His after resurrection and triumph over death.³ Estius.
Cyril.

Origen.
Chrysostom,
Corn. & Lap.

¹ “Meaning either the sword or spear of scandal, as the Syriac version renders it; so the calumny and reproach of the tongues of men is compared to a sharp sword [Ps. lvii. 4]. And such the Virgin might meet with on account of her conception in an unmarried state, which might greatly wound her soul; or else the sorrows she met with on account of her Son, who was a man

of sorrows, from His cradle to His cross; and His sorrows, like so many darts or javelins, rebounded from Him to her and pierced her soul through.” —Gill.

² “τὰς ὥδινας δὲ διέφυγε τίκτουσα, ταύτας ἐν τῷ τοῦ πάθους καιρῷ ὑπέμεινε.” —Damascenus, *De Fide Orthodoxy*, lib. iv. cap. 14, in fin.

³ “The words τὴν ψυχὴν διελύσει—

1 Sam. i. 22.
Ac. s xxvi. 7.
1 Tim. v. 5.

(36) *And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser :¹ she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity : (37) and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.*

Estius.

Corn. & Lap.
Stella.

Salmeron.

That is, she was a widow of the age of eighty-four years, having been only seven of these years married.² And when we read that she *departed not from the Temple*, these words do not mean that she lived within the Temple, but that she was always there at the times of Temple service. Thus it is said in the very next verse that she came into the Temple, clearly implying she did not live in it. In the same way as St. Luke here speaks, St. Paul says that he does not *cease to give thanks* for his Ephesian converts; that is, that he continually offers thanks to God because of them.

She *served God with fastings and prayers*. By fasting the appetite is bridled and the body offered to God, as by prayers we present our soul to Him. By the former the temptations of the body are weakened, by the latter those of the soul. These two services, prayer and fasting, are closely connected, since the body and soul are united, and make but one man. By fasting we restrain the body, by prayer we raise the soul to God; and these are not merely united, they are each of them aids for the due performance of the other.

Luca Brug.

Mark xv. 43.
Luke xxiv.
21.

(38) *And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all*

ταὶ πόμφαίᾳ cannot contain the idea of unmixed trouble, without including that of consolation: this would cast a shade over the joyful tone of the whole prophecy. The idea of the deepest, most exquisite agony of soul, rather includes here the idea of salvation and perfecting through it, just as the *ἀντιλέγεσθαι* (ver. 34) comprises the victory over every *ἀντιλογία*. Mary's distress, which was one with her Son's, appears at once killing and quickening." — *Olshausen*.

¹ Hence it is clear that there were some of the ten tribes who returned with Judah and Benjamin, were pro-

bably led away captive with these tribes. Israel had been gradually diminishing in numbers and Judah increasing before the captivity under Nebuchadnezzar.

² But Gill reckons her much older; he says, "Her age will appear to be great, if it be observed that she was seven years a married woman, and fourscore and four years a widow, which make ninety-one; and if she was married at twelve years and a half, at which time the Jews reckoned females marriageable, she must be an hundred and three years old; and perhaps her age might be eight or ten years more."

them that looked for redemption (λύτρωσιν¹) in Jerusalem.²

She spake to all them who looked for a redeemer from the bondage of sin, and who longed for a deliverer from the temptations of their spiritual foes, for such, doubtless, there were at this moment of abounding wickedness. But these words seem more especially to refer to those who were weighed down by the yoke of Herod, and by that of the Romans, which oppressed the whole nation. These men, seeing that the moment fixed by prophecy had come, and that *the sceptre* was departing from Judah, wished for the Messiah as a temporal deliverer from their enemies, the oppressors of their nation.

Gen. xlix. 10.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

The birth of Christ was witnessed to not only by prophets and shepherds, but also by aged and holy men and women. Every age, both sexes, and the wonders of the events which happened at His nativity, confirm the truth of this article of the faith. A virgin brings forth, the barren is with child, the dumb speaks, Elizabeth prophesies, the wise men come to worship, the babe leaps in its mother's womb, Anna praises God, and the aged Simeon lingered out his life in expectation of Christ's coming.

Ambrose.

(39) And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

That is, on their return to their own land, after flying into Egypt, and residing there, *they returned*, not to Bethlehem, from which place they had come to present Christ in the Temple, but *to their own city Nazareth*. St. Luke passes over the flight into Egypt because it had been fully related by St. Matthew, the Evangelists being accustomed to pass over those incidents which had been narrated by the others.

Luca Brug.

Maldonatus.
Bede.

(40) And the Child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon Him.

Luke i. 80;
ii. 52.

So real was the human nature, the body which Christ bore, and which He took of His mother, that it grew whilst

¹ See note to verse 29.

² "Christus accepit testimonium à pastoribus, à Magis, et ab his senioribus Simeone et Anna; sed pastores

instructi fuerunt ab angelo, Magi à stella, senes isti à Spiritu Sancto."—*Salmeron*.

the spirit of man which was in Him waxed strong. And He was *filled with wisdom*—not, that is, that He was gradually perfected in wisdom by becoming wise, but that He, the Child Jesus, was *filled with wisdom* from the moment of His birth: not attaining to it in long course of time, but possessing it from the beginning; not becoming full, but being full.¹

As, however, there were in Christ two natures, the Divine and the human—two intelligences—two wills in one person—so was there in Him a twofold wisdom. One uncreate, perfect, and incapable of increase—the Word of God eternal and divine; the other wisdom, human, created, and capable of increase. Of the first there could be no enlargement; it was full and perfect from the beginning: the latter, however, was capable of increase, and grew with His growth.²

In one sense, indeed, it is true that even the Divine wisdom increased; for though He was full of that Divine wisdom from the first, since He was the very fountain of wisdom, yet the manifestation of that wisdom to others daily increased so long as He was on earth, and proportionally to the increase of His body. The acts of His Divine wisdom, that is, became more numerous day by day, though the heavenly wisdom itself by which He acted knew no increase.

And the grace of God was upon Him:—

(1) The grace, that is, which is of God, and which He possessed as being God, since He was the God-Man, as we read—*we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father*—that is, the glory which is peculiar to the only begotten.

(2) That grace was in Him, as the fountain of grace to

¹ Πληρούμενον σοφία. — “Non est vertendum verbo imperfecti temporis, *et implebatur*; in sacris enim litteris hoc verbum πληροῦμαι non motum ad plenitudinem, sed terminum plenitudinis significat; vel, ut clarius dicam, non plenum fieri, sed plenum esse. Extat enim exemplum Josue iii. 15, ὁ δὲ Ἰορδάνης ἐπληροῦτο. Non est sensus, Jordanis implebatur, sed plenus erat: ita etiam nunc *plenus erat sapientia*, non autem implebatur sapientia, dicendum est.” — *Toletus*.

² “John Damascene, in his dissertation Περὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ δυὸ θελημάτων καὶ ἐνεργειῶν, says: “Ἐκ τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς καὶ νοεράς τὴν σοφίαν. προέκοπτε γὰρ σοφία καὶ ἡλικία. οὐ γὰρ τῇ θείᾳ σοφίᾳ προ-

έκοπτεν. ἐξ ἄκρας γὰρ συλλήψεως τελεία γέγονεν ἔνωσις, καὶ ἄκρα συναφεία, καὶ οὐ προσθήκη θείας τινὸς δυνάμεως ἔσχεν· ἀλλ’ ἀνθρωπίνῃ σοφίᾳ προέκοπτε· κατὰ γὰρ τὸ μέτρον τῆς ἡλικίας ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη ἐν αὐτῷ σοφία ἐδείκνυτο· . . . εἰ δὲ σοφίαν ἔσχεν ἀνθρωπίνην, πάντως καὶ νοῦν· σοφία γὰρ νοῦ γέννημά τε καὶ δύναμις.” — § xxxviii. And again, in his dissertation Κατὰ τῆς Θεοστυγοῦς αἰρέσεως τῶν Νεστοριανῶν, he says: “Εἰ λίγοιτο προκόπτειν ὁ Ἰησοῦς σοφία, καὶ ἡλικία καὶ χάριτι, μὴ ψιλὸν ὑποτόπαζε ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλὰ θεὸν ἐνανθρωπήσαντα καὶ σαρκακωμένον, ἱφίεντα τῇ οἰκείᾳ σαρκὶ διὰ τῶν οἰκείων εἶναι τοῦ ἰδίας φύσεως· ἵνα μὴ τέρας νομισθῇ ἢ ἐνανθρώπησις.” — § xxviii.

man, not in any limited measure, but in its fulness; and this grace was Divine, that grace by which men are reconciled to God. Toletus.

Whilst, then, in the first part of this Gospel we see that our Blessed Lord submitted to all the observances of the ceremonial law, and did all things which were prescribed by the Law of Moses, in these latter words, which tell us of the growth of His body, and the gradual increase of strength to His spirit, we see that He was born—so real is His humanity—under the same law as man, and that He was made in all things like to His brethren after the flesh. Bonaventura.

We are taught, also, by the example of the blessed Virgin, these three several truths:—

(1) That we should approach God with pure heart, for she went not up until the days of her purification were ended—until she was wholly pure.

(2) That we should make an acknowledgment for every mercy and blessing given us by God. She went up for this reason, to show her thankfulness to Him for the birth of the Child.

(3) That when we go to God's house, there to thank Him for His mercies to us, we are to show the reality of our thanksgiving, and to make an open confession that all we have is of God's bounty, by making a sacrifice, an offering of our substance to Him—that we offer a lamb if we are able; if not, that we offer what we have it in our power to present, be it but *a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons*. Alvernus.

••• “O Jesu desiderabilis, qui in templo Te justo Simeoni, Te ad videndum desideranti, ad amplexandum misericorditer tribuisti; veni, Jesu dulcissime, et toto desiderio Te expectanti Te ipsum clementer indulge: et quicquid impuritatis in me inveneris, per gratiam purificantem expelle: et cor meum, templum Tuum, dignanter

inhabitando perfice, ibi Te brachiis desiderii amplexer et teneam. Da mihi semper desiderare Te, fontem luminis, qui es apud Patrem: et non prius de hac vita exeam, quam Te oculis cordis videam, qui es amor et desiderium, vita et præmium Te desiderantium. Amen.”—*Ludolph.*

ST. MATTHIAS' DAY.

ST. MATTHEW XI. 25—30.

Ps. viii. 2.
Isa. xxix. 14;
xxxii. 4;
xliv. 18;
lxi. 1.
Wisdom iii.
19.
Matt. xiii. 11,
16, 17.
Luke x. 21.
1 Cor. i. 19, 27;
ii. 8.
2 Cor. iii. 14;
iv. 3.

Luke x. 17.

Maldonatus.

(25) *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*¹

THESE words of our Blessed Lord were spoken in the presence of His disciples immediately after the return of the seventy from their mission, and after His denunciation of woe upon those who had rejected Him. The disciples came to Him, exulting in the success which had attended their teaching, and glorying in the power with which their words were accompanied, *saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name.* Then, *at that time*—lest they should be puffed up with pride, and should attribute this success to mere human means—He *answered* and pointed out the source of power by giving public thanks to His Father for the miracles which had been wrought, and for the mercies which had followed upon the preaching of the disciples. He, *at that time*, when He reproved the sins and unbelief of the multitude, especially the sin of Chorazin and of Bethsaida and the blindness of the people of Capernaum, *the wise and prudent* of the world, gave thanks to the Father

¹ “Merito hoc Evangelium in die gloriosi Apostoli Matthiæ legitur, quia unus fuit Matthias ex his septuaginta duobus discipulis, et unus de istis parvulis cui revelatum est mysterium Evangelii. Cum ergo revertissent septuaginta duo discipuli ex missione sua ad munus Apostolicum præstandum, et narrassent quanta per eos Deus efecisset, et exultarent de subjectione dæmonum, Dominus Jesus prius com-

pressit exultationem eorum in spiritu humano factam, deinde Ipse exultavit in Spiritu Sancto; ne vanam aliquam exultationem et carnalem existimares, sed verè spirituales et à Spiritu Sancto effectam, et de materia spirituali, puta de spirituum immundorum ejectione per discipulos; et ad finem divinæ gloriæ illustrandæ; etsi Græcè habetur tantum, *exultavit Jesus Spiritu* [Luca x. 21].”—*Salmeron.*

for the faith of His disciples and for the success of their mission. He had just taught them that it was less a matter for rejoicing that Satan was subject to them than that their Father loved them, and that their names were written in the book of life; and then, to direct them to the Source of all mercies, and to abate their satisfaction in the success which had attended their mission, as though it were their own work and the effect of their own strength, He gave thanks to God the Father for all these gifts, and for the success which had followed upon the teaching of those whom He sent into the world for this purpose. And by this giving of thanks our Blessed Lord teaches us that He joys in the success of that ministry which He has committed unto men, not only noting the labours of His servants, not only rewarding their toil, but joying in that harvest which is the fruit of their labours and the visible result of their toil; and since He is the same at all times, He thus assures us that He rejoices now, as He rejoiced then, over the conversion of sinners and the return of any one wanderer from the ways of sin.

Beaux Amis.

Luke x. 20.

Chrysostom.

Faber Stap.

Ward.

Jesus answered. This is a Hebrew idiom, not implying that a direct question had been put to our Blessed Lord, to which He was now replying,¹ but that His words had reference to some thought in the heart of those who were standing before Him, or that they were connected with an event that had just happened.² Here His words are an evident answer to the expression of joy which His disciples had uttered on their return, and they are, at the same time, a reply to the question which frequently, on other occasions, arose in the mind of the followers of Christ, which finds indeed a place in the heart of so many Christians at all times: why did He not reveal Himself to others as well as to those from whom His disciples had just returned? The answer is, because of the hardness of man's heart, because

Menochius.

Cajetan.

¹ Ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν. "Id est, subjungens, vel fari orsus." — *Menochius*. "In verba erumpens occasione arcanorum Dei judiciorum, quæ partim verbis superioribus expresserat, partim Secum cogitabat. Impropiè igitur accipitur respondendi vox, phrasi sacris litteris familiari, ubi ex re præsentis occasio accipitur in verba prorumpendi, etiam si nulla alicujus interrogatio præcesserit, ex Hebraico ac Syriaco verbo חָנָה *hana*, quod sæpe non tam respondere, quàm cogitatam et opportunam orationem proferre, aut

intermissum sermonem proseguere et velut novum subicere ac ordiri significat, ita ut planè sit loqui, sermonemque instituere, maximè sequente verbo dicendi, ut passim in Job et Evangeliiis." — *Luca Brugensis*.

² "ἀποκριθεὶς in the sense of answering is bad Greek according to Phrynichus, apud Schleusner: ἀποκρίναμενος would be right, so the Hebrew חָנָה, to which ἀποκρίνσθαι answers. It means here 'continued His discourse.' Comp. xxii. 1: xxvi. 25, 63." — *Kebble*.

Bruno.

of their blindness through self-confidence and their reliance on the wisdom and the prudence of this world.

Bengel.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Athanasius.

Hugo de S.
Claro.

Menochius.

Bengel.

Maldonatus.

Beaux Amis.

Avendaño.

Chrysostom.

Matt. xviii. 3.

Wordsworth.

I thank Thee (ἐξομολογοῦμαι σοι). Every act by which we confess God is a giving thanks to Him, a praising Him; and every word of praise to God is a confession of His greatness, His love, or His mercy.¹ Our Blessed Lord here praised God not only as the *Father* of the only begotten Son—for by this name He appeals to His *Father*, the First Person in the ever-blessed Trinity—but also as the *Lord* of all creation, whether of persons or of things,² and therefore of Himself, who became of the number of created beings from the moment when He took to Himself man's nature, and was clothed with man's flesh.³ *Because Thou hast hid these things*—the facts and mysterious truths made known by Christ's advent—from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes—hidden them from those who were wise and prudent in their own conceit, and in the wisdom of this world—especially, that is, from the Scribes and Pharisees and the doctors of the law amongst the Jews—but *hast revealed them unto babes*, to the Apostles and disciples of Christ, to men of simple childlike heart and guileless faith, and to the faithful souls who, moved by their teaching, had accepted the truths which Christ had come to make known; and who, in truth, in lowliness, and in singleness of heart, were as very babes.⁴ He says not, that He thanks His Father for thus hiding the truth from any heart, but He gave Him thanks that though He had hidden these things from the wise and prudent of the world, yet He had revealed them to babes, and made known His mercies and the mysteries of the faith to those who were but children in knowledge—leaving, in this act, a lesson to the proud, and telling them that if they humble themselves and *become as little children*, they too shall sit at His feet and shall understand those truths which He has revealed to others.

As our Saviour seems to be here pointing out the hindrances to the reception of His truth, arising from a confidence in

¹ "ἐξομολογοῦμαι means, (1) to confess sin, (2) to give thanks, (3) to glorify, more generally; and this seems to be the meaning here."—*Keble*.

² 'Εξομολογοῦμαι. "The LXX. use this word for הודחא *hodhah*, laudavit, celebravit, glorificavit. Cf. Luke ii. 38. Cf. 2 Sam. xxii. 50. *Vorst de Heb.* p. 173."—*Wordsworth*. "Hebraicum verbum הודחא *iada*, cui respondet Syriacum ܝܕܐ *ida*, positum in quinta

conjugatione, cum Græci constanter verterint ἐξομολογεῖσθαι, confiteri, non minus significat laudibus celebrare et gratias agere. Unde illud frequens in Psalmis, *Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus, &c.*"—*Luca Brugensis*.

³ "Patrem Filii esse, et Dominum creaturæ."—*Ambrose*.

⁴ "Nota hoc Evangelium legitur de S. Matthia, quia Deus ei redemptionis et fidei secreta revelavit, quæ Judæ abscondit."—*Petrus de Palude*.

their own wisdom and prudence, which blinded the eyes of the rulers and guides of the Jewish nation, so will His words apply to the reception of this message of salvation by Gentile hearts, the *babes* in Divine wisdom. Ambrose.

Our Blessed Lord, then, here gives us the reason why the people of Capernaum, and why also the Scribes and Pharisees of Jerusalem, rejected Him. It was because they were *wise and prudent* in their own eyes, whereas the state of mind which is a prerequisite for the reception of Divine truth is that of humility and self-abasement. In their own estimation, the doctors of the law were *wise* in speculative knowledge, and *prudent* in the practical matters of life—*wise* in their knowledge of Divine truth, and *prudent* as to human affairs.¹ And in contrasting them with *babes*, our Blessed Lord shows us that it is not their wisdom and prudence which blinded their eyes to the things of God, but their want of that simplicity and humility which is the characteristic of the childlike mind, and which goes hand in hand with all real wisdom.² Again, He shows, that this failure on the part of the *wise and prudent* to understand what He revealed arose from no lack of power in the doctrines themselves nor in the Giver of them, by pointing out that the truth which the disciples proclaimed came from Him who, whilst He was by eternal generation the *Father* of the only begotten Son, was, at the same time, the absolute *Lord of heaven and earth*, the Giver of light to all men, and the Creator of angels and men, and of all things in the world. Corn. & Lap.
Gorranus.
Cajetan.
Corn. & Lap.

And by proclaiming the Father to be the *Lord of heaven and earth*, our Blessed Lord teaches us these truths:—

(1) That He is not the Father, the Lord, and the Ruler of the nation of Jews only, but that He is the Father also of the Gentile people—of all who dwell on the earth. This He declares more significantly afterwards, when He calls *all* those who feel the burden of sin to enter into His rest. For

¹ "Inter *prudentes et sapientes* hanc agnoscit differentiam Cajetanus noster, quod sapientia est circa divina, prudentia circa humana. Sacerdotes ergo et reliqui legisperiti et circa divina et circa humana se nimis intelligentes reputabant: circa divina, quia de Scripturarum intelligentiâ præsumebant; circa humana, quia cum pro illo tempore Judæorum rempublicam gubernassent, dispositioni suæ nimium deferebant."—*Emman. ab Incarnatione*.

² "Tripliciter dicuntur aliqui parvuli.

Ad literam parvuli dicuntur abjecti: unde in Abdia 2, "*Eccce parvulum dedite: contemptibilis tu es valde*. Item dicuntur parvulus humilitate, quia parva de se sentit. Unde Dominus [infra xviii. 3], *Nisi conversi fueritis et efficiamini sicut parvulus iste non intrabitis in regnum cælorum*. Item simplicitate; unde Apostolus [1 ad Cor. xiv. 20], *Malitia parvuli estote*. Unde potest illud intelligi: quia revelasti ea parvulis et abjectis piscatoribus."—*Th. Aquinas*.

He who is Lord of all in the *earth* by this call showed that He willed to make all men partakers of the blessings of the kingdom of *heaven*.

Corn. & Lap.

(2) He who is *Lord of heaven* will not overlook any one in the world, but will judge and condemn or reward the loftiest of the sons of earth. He who is *Lord of earth* will not disregard the lowliest of those who lie upon the bosom of earth. He who is *Lord of heaven* is able to give heavenly, spiritual, and eternal blessings to those who ask Him. He who is *Lord of earth* is ready to dispense temporal benefits and rewards to those who do His will.

Salmeron.

(3) In thanking Him who is the Almighty Father, our Blessed Lord anticipates and condemns the various forms of heresy concerning the nature of the Son which has at various times afflicted the Christian Church.¹ He who thanked the Father is therefore distinct from the Father: in this are the fancies of the Sabellians shown to be without foundation. In calling Him His *Father* He claims to be of the same nature as God, and thus He denied the heresy of Arius. In calling Him the *Lord of heaven and earth*, He took away all ground for the old heresy of two distinct principles, and asserted the one God to be the Maker of that which is good and of that which has become evil, of the heaven and the earth.

Th. Aquinas.

Gorranus.

The ways of God are not as the ways of the world. The world makes choice of the rich and powerful to carry out its purposes, and delights in the *wise and prudent* in earthly knowledge. The *Lord of heaven and earth*, on the other hand, selects the poor and humble, the despised and simple in heart; and these He makes wise in spiritual learning, rich in the gift of eternal life, and heirs of His kingdom which is without end.²

Corn. & Lap.

1 Cor. i. 21.

(26) *Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight.*

Having in the preceding verse given thanks that the mystery which was hidden from the *wise and prudent* through their self-blindness was revealed to *babes*, Christ now assigns the cause for this revelation of the mysteries of God, even

¹ "Christus in eo quod homo est confitetur—id est, gratias agit Trinitati. In hoc quod Deus nullas refert gratias, licet omnia à Patre habeat, quia per naturam habet."—Hugo de S. Charo.

² "A sapientibus et prudentibus secundum superficiem exteriorum vel

secundum mundanam philosophiam de qua 1 Cor. i. 20: *Stultam fecit Deus sapientiam hujus mundi*. Hæc autem triplex est, *terrena, animalis, diabolica*, Jac. iii. 15. *Terrena* in cupidis et avaris: *animalis* in voluptuosis et luxuriosis: *diabolica* in superbis et ambitiosis."—Gorranus.

His own pleasure. *For so it seemed good in Thy sight; that is, Even so, Father, I thank Thee, because it has so pleased Thee.* The good pleasure of God is the reason why He has made all things as He has: His will is the law of equity to all created beings. The incarnation and redemption of man, the various gifts of mercy to man, spring only from the good pleasure of God, not from our merit or deserving, but from His inexhaustible love. And because all gifts which God bestows come from His good pleasure alone, who desires in all things that which is best for man, therefore His gifts are man's highest good. That, again, which is just and good is alone pleasing to Him who is the just and good One: therefore what He wills and gives to man must needs be good for man, since the Giver is goodness itself.

God has revealed Himself to all. He gives grace to all. Self-conceit, the pride of the corrupt heart, and the blindness caused by indulgence in sin, hides the light of God's truth from man, and obscures that knowledge which God has given to all men to lead them to Him. He wills man's happiness, but He wills that man should himself labour in the discipline of self, and *work out his own salvation*, so that when He calls, man of his own freewill should obey that call. He sends His light to all, for He is *the True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*. If all, therefore, are not illuminated, it is not from any defect of that Light, which is given to all, but from some defect in those who should see the Light; for though a blind man sees not the sun, it is not less true that the sun is in the heavens, and giveth light for the benefit of all.

(27) *All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.*

Having declared that the Father was omnipotent, that He was *Lord of heaven and earth*, now, lest any who heard Him should think that He Himself was not omnipotent—was not God—He says that *all things are delivered unto Him by the Father*;¹ that He, the Saviour of the world, possesses all power and authority over all creatures,² so that all who come

¹ "*Omnia tradita sunt mihi. Attende æqualitatem, sed tamen à Patre originem; quod tamen est contra Sabellium. Patre meo. Unde per generationem hoc recessit.*" — Th. Aquinas.
² "Quo sensu dicit Joan. xvi. 15, *Omnia quaecunque habet Pater Mea sunt.*

Emm. ab Incarnat.

Maldonatus.

Jansen Yp.

Theophylact.

Gregory.

Phil. II. 12.

John I. 9.

Alb. Magnus.

4 Esdras II. 34.
Wisdom VIII. 4.
Matt. XXVIII. 18.
Luke X. 22.
John I. 18
III. 35
V. 27;
VI. 46;
X. 15;
XIII. 3;
XVII. 2.
1 Cor. XV. 24, 25, 27.

Corn. & Lap.

Maldonatus.

Heb. vii. 25.

Paulus de
Palacio.

John xvi. 15.

John xvii. 2.

John xvii.

10.

Luca Brug.

Jerome.

Hilary.

Tertullian.

Theophylact

John i. 3.

Gorranus.

to Him according to His gracious invitation may be assured by His own words that He hath power to save unto the uttermost, and to give them all that is necessary in this life and in the next. *All things are delivered unto Me.* Therefore can none give us what we need save Christ alone.

All things are delivered unto Me of My Father. This truth our Blessed Lord frequently declared to His disciples, as when He said, *All things that the Father hath are Mine*; and when, in His prayer to His Father on the night of His betrayal, He declared of the Son, *Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him*; and again, *All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.* Not, that is, by alienation of anything, but by the communication of all power and attributes. The Father, because He is the Father, is the source of all authority: hence Christ says that the power which He possesses over all things created was delivered unto Him. He declares—

(1) That He is co-equal in authority with the Father, over all persons and all things; for all are under Him, since He has derived from the Father the Divine essence—without which, indeed, He could not be the Maker of *all things*. But we know that He at the first created all things, for *all things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.* He is very God of very God, the Creator of fallen man and the Glorifier of the children of God, the Ruler of all things corporeal or incorporeal.

(2) The perfect co-equality of knowledge between the Father and the Son: *no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son.*¹

(3) The perfect co-equality of will with the Father, since He makes known the Father to whomsoever He Himself wills.

Et in hac acceptione illud pronomen *Mihi* facit hunc sensum: *Mihi*, ut Deo et per generationem æternam; quæ Filius à Patre accepit et naturam et attributa, reliquasque proprietates absolutas. Unde notat D. Thomas Christum non dixisse, *Omnia tradita sunt Mihi* à Domino coeli et terræ, sed à *Patre Meo*, ut indicaret illa Sibi communicata per generationem æternam." — *Em-manuale ab Incarnatione.*

¹ "Hic agendum est de perfectissima cognitione, quæ attenditur penes comprehensionem. Nemo siquidem comprehendit omnipotentiam Dei nisi Deus, et propterea hac consummatis-

sima notione nemo novit Patrem nisi Filius, et nemo novit Filium nisi Pater. Ita enim arcte nectuntur hæ cognitiones, ut adinvicem divelli non possint." — *Jo, Arboreus.* "Modo specialiter ad propositum adaptat: et non solum quantum ad æqualitatem ad Patrem sed etiam quantum ad consubstantialitatem. Substantia enim Patris superat omnem intelligentiam, cum ipsa essentia Patris dicatur incognoscibilis sicut substantia Filii. . . . Sed quid est? Nonne sancti noverunt? Dicendum quod attingendo, vel fide: sed comprehendendo non cognoscunt." — *Th. Aquinas.*

And this authority which Christ Jesus has over all things He possesses in a twofold manner, since in His person are united the two distinct natures of God and man—

(1) As He was begotten by eternal generation consubstantial with the Father, and in all things equal to Him, save in that He was begotten, the Father being alone unbegotten, so by eternal generation derived from the Father all things in that begetting were delivered unto Him, all perfection, all authority, and all power of the Father.

Rab. Maurus.

Dion. Carth.
Leinard.

(2) By reason of the hypostatic union of the humanity with the Divinity, in the person of Christ Jesus, were committed to Him all things external to the Godhead—all created things in heaven and earth.¹ And this He has in a threefold manner—

(a) The Man Christ Jesus possessed authority over all things from the moment of His conception, when human flesh was for ever united to the Divine Word.

(β) Power over all things was given to Him at His resurrection from the dead, according to His own declaration when, appearing to His disciples, He said, *All power is given to Me in heaven and earth.* This power was given to Him because of His humanity, since by virtue of His Divinity He always possessed this power.

Matt. xxviii.
18.
Tostatus.

(γ) Effectually all things will be put under Him, and everything that now opposes the will of God will be put in subjection under the Son, at the day of judgment, when Christ shall reign over all things, and shall give the kingdom to the Father.

All things are delivered unto Me. Here He declares Himself the Redeemer of the world: for this end were all things delivered unto Him. No man knoweth *the Father, save the Son.* Here He reveals Himself as the Wisdom of the Father, the Source of all spiritual knowledge to man, the Revealer of truth to the world; for the mystery of the nature of God, the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, is wholly from revelation. These are facts which no man could know without the revelation made to the world by the Son of God.² And let us note, that our Blessed Lord does not say

Menochius.
Gorranus.

Guillaud.

¹ "Cum vel solus Filius dicitur nosse Patrem, vel solus Pater Filium, non excluditur Spiritus Sanctus; sicut nec significatur Patrem non nosse Seipsum, aut Filium Seipsum. Regula enim theologica est, quod dictio exclusiva vel exceptiva addita uni personæ non excludit in essentialibus alteram personam, sed tantum creaturas." — Jansen Gand.

² "... Qu'ils apprennent au moins quelle est la religion qu'ils combattent avant que de la combattre. Si cette religion se vantait d'avoir une vue claire de Dieu, et de Le posséder à découvert et sans voile, ce serait la combattre que de dire qu'on ne voit rien dans le monde qui la montre avec cette évidence. Mais puisqu'elle dit au contraire que les hommes sont

that no man can know God without the revelation made by the Son, but no man can know *the Father*. Whatever knowledge there might be of One God—the Maker and Preserver of all things—by reason and by the observation of nature, yet the knowledge of God as the Father of the Son—the fact of a plurality of Persons in that one undivided Godhead—could only be known by revelation. Again, *no man knoweth the eternal generation and Divinity of the Son*. No man could know Christ as to His Divine nature and the mystery of the hypostatic union. This was known only to His Father, by whom all things were known. And more than this, though by working His miracles in the sight of men and of devils He declared the greatness and the unbounded nature of His power, yet in the power to redeem the race of man from bondage to Satan, in His power to restore immortality to the bodies of men, and to give to them the resurrection from the dead, none could know the *Son*, save by that revelation by which He made known the mercies of God to man. What knowledge the world has of the Son of God, they have from the gift of the Father. No one can know the Son as the herald of the Father's will, the way to the Father, the Saviour of mankind, the Sanctifier and Redeemer of all those who obey God's call, unless this knowledge has been given him by the Father, God Almighty.¹

And this knowledge of the Father, and therefore of the Son, we have only by faith now; hereafter we shall know even as we are known; but so long as we are in this life we can know the Father only by the manifestation made to us by the Son.²

Cajetan.
Jansen Yp.
Tostatus.
Arias Mont.
Guilliaud.
1 Cor. xiii.
12.
Dion. Carth.

(28) *Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

dans les ténèbres et dans l'éloignement de Dieu, qu'il s'est caché à leur connaissance, que c'est même le nom qu'il se donne dans les Écritures, *Deus absconditus*."—*Pascal, Pensées*, art. ix. "Dieu, étant ainsi caché, toute religion qui ne dit pas que Dieu est caché n'est pas véritable; et toute religion qui n'en rend pas la raison n'est pas instruisante. La notre fait tout cela: *Vere Tu es Deus absconditus*."—*Ib.* art. xi.

¹ "C'est Jésus-Christ qui est le souverain dispensateur et le maître

de toutes choses par le don de Son Père. Tous les ressorts et toute l'économie des Ses grâces sont dans la main de Jésus-Christ comme Prêtre et Victime de Dieu, comme Sauveur et Médiateur, Chef et Modèle, Pasteur et Juge souverain des hommes."—*Quesnel*.

² "*Nisi Filius, non excluditur S uctus Spiritus qui idem est in natura: sed cum dicit nemo novit intelligitur nullus homo nisi Filius.*"—*Th. Aquinas*.

Come is the invitation of Christ to those whose will He asks, and whom He will not compel. In this word *come* is the fact of man's free will asserted.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Having before declared His power over all things, and His equality of power and knowledge with the Father, so that we may have confidence in coming to Him, as to One who has power to give what He promises, Christ now reveals Himself to us as a God of love and mercy, not only able to aid all who come to Him, but as One who invites all men and is ready to receive all who accept His invitation. But He not only invites all by His words, He does so by His example; for He who called and lifted from the dust and healed the wounds of sin in a Magdalen, in a Matthew, in a Peter, and in a Paul, in inviting, accepting, and showing mercy on them, has given us the assurance that He will in like manner show mercy to us. And this call of His is universal. Christ says not, Let this or that man come unto Me, but Let *all* come;¹ *all* who are labouring in the service of the Evil One, and burdened by the consciousness of sin. *All* are bidden by Him to come, that He may show forth His mercy towards them all.²

Corn. & Lap.

Chrysostom.

Come unto Me. In these words, again, we find the trace of the doctrine of Christ's equality with the Father. Our Blessed Lord promises rest to those who come to Him. The Father of old had said the same of Himself—*My people shall dwell in a peaceful habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.* Here Christ presents Himself as the final rest of the souls of all men, as Him from whom all rest cometh; but only in its Maker can the soul find rest. And He who invites all gives to all the power to obey this call. None can say with truth, I cannot come; I am not predestinated to eternal rest, since He invites *all*, and wills that *all* should be saved. None can say with truth, Christ did not die for me, for He came for the redemption of the whole world, and to be a Saviour to all men; all who need Him—that is, every man—He invites to come unto Him, who is a Mediator, a Redeemer, a Sanctifier for all men. We are to obey this call; we are to come to Him by faith and obedience; not by the action of the body, but by the uplifting of the soul. We are bidden to draw near by prayer in faith, and to come to Him by treading in His steps, by copying His example, so that He also may come to

Guilland.

Isa. xxxii. 18.

Stier.

Salmeron.

¹ "Οὐχ ὁ δεῖνα καὶ ὁ δεῖνα, ἀλλὰ πάντες οἱ ἐν φροντίσιν, οἱ ἐν λύπαις, οἱ ἐν ἁμαρτίαις."—S. Chrysostom.

² "Not only laden as sinful; but

weary and desirous to be delivered from it."—Sutton's *Disce Mori*, c. 19, § xii.

Ludolph. us for our healing and glorification.¹ When He sought us in order that we should come to Him, He willed to come to us. Both these comings—that of Christ to man, and of man to Christ—are necessary for our salvation. It was necessary, however, that His coming to us should precede our coming to Him; for had He not come to man by His incarnation, and unless He still came by that Spirit which He has sent to be *another Comforter*, we should not be able to obey His call and come to Him.

John xiv. 16. Salmeron. *All ye that labour and are heavy laden.*² These words comprehend the active and passive side of human misery, under one form or other of which *all* are sufferers.³ All these He calls, whatever their need may be; *all*, whatever their station or their attainments or their sins may be, for there is in this, as in other things, no respect of persons. But, as the Father had given *all things* into His hands, so now He calls *all* men to Him. His Church is no longer to consist of Jews only, but is to embrace all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, for all are bidden by Him to come and in Him to find rest. According to some commentators; there is a distinction implied between those who *labour* and those who are *heavy laden*. They *labour* who are battling with temptation, and are engaged in the struggle against sin, in contradistinction to those who are already *heavy laden* with the weight of past sin and by long slavery to sinful habits. Sin is a *labour* to us whilst we are engaged in it, and a heavy load to us when we have accomplished it. The covetous, the lustful, the ambitious, exceedingly *labour* in the pursuit of their unlawful desires; and yet, when all is done, they do but *labour* still more under the heavy burden which they have laid on their shoulders. The Jews, again, laboured under the observance of the Mosaic law, whilst the Gentiles were *heavy laden* with the weight of their sins, through their ignorance of God.

Alford. But whatever force there may be in this distinction, our Blessed Lord promises rest both to those still labouring and

¹ "There are, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts, and boisterous objections, wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known more than myself; which I confess I conquered, not in a martial posture, but on my knees." — Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, vol. ii. p. 27, ed. Wilkins.

² "An allusion here, probably, to the hard bondage in Egypt, which is

often referred to as an emblem of our natural state." — *Keble*.

³ "Οἱ κοπιῶντες καὶ πεφορτισμένοι. Inter *laborare* et *oneratum esse* quidam sic distinguunt, ut *laborare* pertineat ad eos qui in aliqua actione et operatione occupantur: *oneratum* verò *esse* ad passionem pertineat quæ ex actione consequitur." — *Jansen Gandavensis*. "Labor est quod agimus, onus est quod sustinemus." — *Tostatus*.

those who have settled down under the weight of their burden. This promise embraces—

(1) Those who are burdened with temporal affliction and the troubles of life, which weigh down the whole soul of man. The gifts proffered us by Christ—union with our Saviour, and the presence of the Holy Ghost the Comforter—deliver us from these by making their presence no longer burdensome to us.¹ When the truths which Christ teaches us are accepted by the heart, then the trials of life are not only disarmed of all power to work evil, but in them we see the materials of our advancement, since these afflictions patiently endured work out *for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* Augustine.
2 Cor. iv. 17.

(2) Those who are oppressed by the burden of sin, and whose consciences are troubled by the knowledge of their sinfulness—whose iniquities *are like a sore burden, too heavy for them to bear.* From this bond of sorrow Christ delivers us when He absolves us from our sins, and deadens within us the power of evil habits.² Ps. xxxviii. 4,
P. B. Vers.
Chrysostom.

(3) This promise also reaches to those who are labouring in vain, and who are weighed down by the heavy load of mere outward observances. The words of our Blessed Lord pointed out a relief to those who were struggling with the requirements of the Mosaic law, which the glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees had robbed of all spiritual value, until it had become a mere *yoke of bondage*, a burden too *grievous to be borne.* But these words of Christ do not concern those subject merely to the Jewish law. It is a promise both to Jew and Gentile: *all* who are burdened, whether by the observances of the ceremonial law which the traditions of man had deprived of all power, or whether *heavy laden* by the empty, unsatisfying, and sinful rites of heathen idolatry, are invited to find rest in Him, who promises deliverance from the cares of life, from the knowledge of sin, and from the empty formalities of mere ritual observances. Theophylact.
Gal. v. 1.
Matt. xxiii. 4

If any, then, have laboured long time under the weight of temptation, and have sought deliverance by their own

¹ "Non liberat Christus suos à præceptis non à miseriis, Imò hoc est Novum Testamentum quod per Christum impletur; *Ego faciam ut in præceptis meis ambuletis* [Ezek. xxxvi. 27]. Sed charitas quam spiritus Christi diffundit in cordibus nostris efficit ut præcepta lubenter impleamus et mala omnia æquanimiter portemus."—*Adr. Man-
gotius.*

² "Laborantes ad refectionem invitatur, ad requiem provocat oneratos. Non tamen interim onus subtrahit aut laborem; magis autem onere alio, alio labore commutat, sed onere levi, suavi iugo, in quibus requies ac refectio, etsi minùs appareat, tamen invenitur."—*Bernard in Psalm., Qui habitat.* Serm. xv. § 2.

Faber Stap.

Gorranus.

Ph. Diez.

Boya.

Cajetan.

Chrysostom.

strength, or by mere empty observances, the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees—if any have yielded themselves to slavery to the devil—if any are burdened by the consciousness of great and many sins, or by doubt, unbelief, and ignorance of God—let them seek deliverance from the Saviour, and obtain the knowledge they need, and free themselves from doubt and perplexity by coming to Him in whom alone they can find rest.¹ Let them cast their burden on Him who has promised to refresh them by His doctrines and to strengthen them by His easy yoke, to cleanse and feed them by His sacraments, and to receive them to His glory and eternal rest.

Though God calls all to Him, yet He particularly instances those who feel they are burdened, those who know that they endure hard labour. At no time is the sinner more disposed to turn to God than in the time of adversity, and when his heart is open through suffering, and he is heavily burdened with the sense of sin and the unsatisfying nature of sin, then especially does God call him from his evil ways, and promises to him *rest*.²

Let the penitent note that it is to Christ we are bidden to come; not to others to entreat for us, but to Him who is the fountain of love itself, and in whom only there is rest. Let him also observe that there is here no promise from the Saviour that He will remove from us the necessity of labour, and that He will take away our heavy burden, for there will still be labour, even to those who are nearest to Him; but what He does promise to those who come is strength to endure all toil, and refreshment after all their labours. *Rest* through the words of comfort spoken to the soul; *rest* by means of the balm poured into the heart through the sacrament of His mercy; *rest* in that glory and place of refreshment after toil which will be the inheritance of His faithful

¹ “ Malignos repellit, laborantes vocat. Dicit illis Jesus, *Discedite à Me omnes qui operamini iniquitatem*; istis ait, *Venite ad Me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis*. Non utique malignitate mentis, sed infirmitate carnis onerati: onerati, inquam, alieni hæreditate peccati. Laborantibus subvenio; fraudulentis prodesse non debeo, ne pluribus noceant. Hos poena compescat, illos emendet gratia. Malitia enim fons peccati est; culpa infirmitatis est lapsus. Illi debeo subvenire qui laborat; illum etiam odiasse qui decipit.”—*Ambrose in Psalmum cix.*

Expos. b, § 25.

² “ Solet nos Deus vocare tanquam agricola prudens, qui sua tempora opportuna expectat ut sementem suam efficiat: Si enim triticum Julii aut Augusti mense seminare, cùm omnia æstivis caloribus ardent, inutilis esset labor; autumnus autem tempus cum decidunt imbres sementi opportunum est: ita etiam peccator cum sano et robusto est corpore, divitiis abundat, voluptatibus affluit et honore superbit, tempus hoc minimè opportunum videtur ut cum eo de morte et judicio agatur.”—*Ph. Diez.*

servants in the world to come.¹ *Rest* and refreshment on the way, so that we may be able to surmount all difficulties and overcome all dangers in our journey through this world; but above all, *rest* and refreshment and eternal joy in that place of *rest* where He is, and which He has prepared for us; to which place of *rest* He is ever calling us, and in which He will bestow the reward for our perseverance in that way to which He calls us now, and in which He will lead us throughout our lives. *Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*² Barradius.

(29) *Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.* Jer. vi. 16.
Zech. ix. 9.
Ecclus. xi.
25, 24.
John xiii. 15.
Phil. ii. 5, 7, 8.
1 Pet. ii. 21.
1 John ii. 6.

Not content with teaching us by His words, our Blessed Lord here gives us Himself as an example how we should walk. In these two things which He here presses upon us is the whole law fulfilled. By meekness, man does that which is just and right to his fellow-man; by lowliness, he does that which is right in the sight of God: but these two, to be of any value, and to be approved of in the sight of our Father, must not be evidenced merely by outward works—they must be the acts of the *heart* itself.³ He, then, that would take Christ's yoke and learn of Him, must be *meek* in his outward deportment, and *lowly* in his own eyes; not, that is, with the outward show of humility, but from the *heart*. *Meek* towards others, *lowly* towards God. *Meek* in times of adversity, patient and submissive to that which is laid upon him, and *lowly* in times of prosperity. Beaux Amis.

Gorranus.
Salneron.

We may, then, learn by this precept of meekness and lowliness—

(1) How highly God regards meekness and lowliness of heart, since these are the qualities which He has especially pointed out for our imitation. We are not bidden to mark how

¹ “*Venite, inquit Christus, ad Me qui laboratis et onerati estis, et Ego reficiam vos. O dulce et admirabile verbum in ore peccatoris, quo Tu, Domine Deus meus, egenum et pauperem invitas ad communionem Tui sacratissimi corporis!*” — *De Imitat. Christi*, cap. i.

² “*Omnes qui laboratis, scilicet sive secundum naturam qua nascimur, scilicet ad laborandum [Job v. 7]. Sive secundum culpam qua transgredimur: in qua transgressione est labor magnus.*

Lassati sumus in via iniquitatis et perditionis et ambulavimus vias difficiles [Sap. v. 7], luxuriosus in voluptatibus, avarus in cupiditatibus, etc. Iste labore est maximè afflictivus.” — *Petrus de Palude*.

³ “*Tria imitanda: scilicet, mititas in conversatione, humilitas in cogitatione, et veritas in intentione. Mitissum, quia nullum lædo: humilis, quia nullum despicio: sed corde, quia nullum decipio.*” — *Gorranus*.

Christ governs the world, nor are we called upon to follow His footsteps in this. Our Blessed Lord does not say, "Learn from Me the deep mysteries of the faith which I reveal to man." He gives us no great labours to accomplish, but He says, "Learn to be meek and lowly of heart, gentle and humble like Me, for this is the foundation of all Christian practices, the compendium of practical divinity." These are the special characteristics of Christ, as pride is the token of Satan; and hence, when our Saviour commends these graces to His disciples, He says emphatically, *Learn of Me*.

(2) We are taught that meekness is the foundation of all spiritual peace, and that there is no *rest* for the soul that has not learnt the lesson of humility in the school of Christ. It is impossible that the proud man, who is always longing for and aiming at high things, should know what this peace of the soul is, since what he aims at is continually flying from his grasp, and is rarely or never attainable.

Corn. & Lap.

(3) We are also taught that meekness and lowliness of heart takes away the sense of labour, and removes much of burden from the soul; whilst, on the other hand, anger and pride are burdensome sins in themselves, and increase the weight of all other sins in the heart.¹

Tostatus.

Ps. xix. 11.

Salmeron.

Take My yoke upon you. Obey, that is, the law and precepts which I give, and in keeping of which *there is great reward*, even remission of sins through Me and union with the Father. 'The *yoke* to which our Blessed Lord compares spiritual obedience is not, at least in its primary meaning, a burden, as many assume—it is that which unites;² hence it is the appropriate symbol of the Gospel:—

Rab. Maurus.
Ephes. iv. 5.

(1) 'The discipline which Christ enjoins is that which unites man to man, which associates in one Church the Jew and Gentile; so that as there is *one Lord*, there is but one Church, *one faith, one baptism*.

(2) The grace which is given by the incarnation of Christ Jesus to all those who serve Him is that *yoke* which unites man to God.

¹ "Christ is termed, in Apoc. i. 8, *the first and the last*; in majesty *the first*, in meekness as *the last* [*Gloss. ordin.*]: His whole life being nothing else but an open book, or rather an open shop of humility. Descend, then, if thou wilt ascend: if thou desire to build high, and to seek the things above, lay thy foundation low. Humbleness of mind is *schola* and *scala cæli*, the school teaching and the scale reaching heaven."—*Dean Boys*.

² "Jugi naturam attende; jugum enim non ab uno animali, sed à duobus portatur: quòd si alterum ex illis majus et longè robustius fuerit, illud est quod totum ferè onus portat et levius fit minori onus. Sic nimirum onus legis evangelicæ est, jugum est à duobus portatum, à Deo scilicet et ab homine et cum Deus major et potentior in immensum sit, perexiguus superest homini hujus oneris labor."—*Labata. in Appar. Con:ionato un.*

(3) By the union of Christ with our nature the body and spirit of the believer is yoked together, and that enmity and war which exists between the unbridled flesh of man and his spirit is destroyed, whilst that unity between the desires and actions which has been lost through sin is restored to man's regenerated nature.

Gorranus.

Let us note the words used by Christ. It is at one time *come*—here it is *take*. We have, therefore, the power given to us to do what Christ commands or to refuse to obey Him.¹ We must hold out the hand to Him if we would be healed. We must draw near to Him if we would have Him draw near to us. Elsewhere He says, *Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes*—as though all depended upon ourselves. For though He made us without ourselves, yet He will not lead us back to that home from which we have wandered unless we seek it. He says in these words, I will not impose My yoke on him who is unwilling, but He calls upon us to take it of our own choice. Again, when He says, *Take My yoke upon you*, He implies that it is to be laid on our shoulders, on our whole nature, restraining all our affections, our body, soul, and spirit—that it is to govern and direct all our actions.²

Alb. Magnus.

Matt. xii. 12.

Bernard.

Isa. i. 16.

Bernard, De diligendo Deo.

Emm. ab Incarnat.

Alb. Magnus.

Learn of Me—not, that is, as He is the Son of God, working miracles, and knowing and foreseeing all things, but as He is the Son of Man, the Pattern to us of meekness and lowliness of heart.³ *For I am meek and lowly of heart*—

Augustine.

(1) *For I am imposing no harsh and tyrannical yoke. I am meek and lowly, and so only give to you that which is good.*

Harloun.

Barradius.

¹ “*Tollite, ait, jugum Meum super vos; ac si diceret: Non impono invitis, sed vos tollite si vultis; alioquin non requiem sed laborem invenietis animabus vestris.*”—*Bernard. de diligendo Deo, cap. xiv.*

“*Tollite, inquit Salvator; non impono, non gravo, non cogo, non invitè vestris cervicibus ligo, sed præparo et offero. Libertatem habetis, liberi creati fuistis. Inest vobis ratio discernendi sub quo domino laboratis; agnoscitis, fortè videtis, et præmia; nec fortè ignoratis quid à vobis exactor improbus exigit, qualia sunt præmia quæ speratis. Si jam asperum jugum displicet, si dissuavitas jam internè jure molestat, si adhuc exire vultis à jugo Pharonicæ oppressionis, cum voluntate libera tollite jugum Meum: si jam factum est vobis odio contra Meum, super vos, ne*

superferamini directionibus Meis, incedentes voluntatibus vestris, sed desuper suaviter premat jugum, si superna captare contenditis. Non humana obedientia, neque terrena regulatio, sed superno jugo agi, facit ad superna conscendere.”—*Simon de Cassia.*

² “*Super vos. Non sub vobis, vel juxta vos, vel in vobis; sed super vos, quia semper exaltatur super nos.*”—*Alb. Magnus.* “*Ait super vos quia quidam sunt qui jugum subter se ponunt, ac qui legem Dei violant et despectui habent, eam veluti conculcantes.*”—*Emman. ab Incarnatione.*

³ “*Non dixit, Discite à Me, quia potens sum: non dixit, Discite à Me, quia gloriosus sum: sed Discite à Me, quia humilis sum, quod potestis imitari.*”—*Ambrose in Psalm. cxix. Expos. 2, § 46.*

Bernard in
Vig. Nat.
Serm. V.

(2) *For* that which I enjoin is but the example of My meekness and humility, and so that which will give rest to the soul will assuage anger, lull the storms of passion, and remove the goads of ambition.

Salmeron.

(3) *For* My meekness and the humility of My human nature is that which has been assumed for your sake, and is not merely an example set before your eyes for imitation, but it is that which is sacramentally efficacious, and gives to you the power to be likewise *meek and lowly*.¹

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Ph. Diez.

Christ significantly joins together these two virtues, meekness and humility, as those virtues which make us acceptable in the sight of God and man. These are indeed closely and intimately connected. He who has a lowly estimation of himself will show this humility by his meekness towards others. Humility is the root and source of all other virtues, and the humbler a man is the nearer he has approached the perfect pattern of holiness; hence our Divine Master, in calling us to *learn* of Him, speaks only of our imitating His example in these virtues.²

Heb. iv. 9.

Lienard.

Bengel.

Ye shall find rest unto your souls—not only, that is, in another world, where *there remaineth a rest for the people of God*, of which all other rest is but the shadow, but also *rest* here, by the restraint of evil passions and the assurance of a good conscience before God. This *rest* flows from the heart of Christ into the soul of every one who is united to Him by a real and living union. This fruit of our union to Christ is, indeed, *rest* :

(1) Because of the calm which it brings to the heart, the quiet of the conscience.

(2) Because of the remission of sins which Christ gives us, putting away from the heart not only the guilt of sin, but also the fear of punishment.

(3) Because of the restraint of sinful lusts, the quenching the fires of sensual passion—the grace of the Spirit, given to

¹ “ Bene nota quòd Jesus universum mundum alloquitur, invitando omnes : et propterea non dicit, Discite à Me, quia jejuno, quia oro, quia pedibus discuro, quia prædico, et similia à quibus posset se aliquis excusare, allegando impotentiam, dicendo se inhabilem ; sed *Discite à Me, quia mitis et humilissim corde* ; nullus enim potest se excusare à dominio propriæ voluntatis, à disciplina domandi internas passiones ; et in his internis consistit disciplina Christiana communis omnibus.” —

Cajetan.

² “ Humilitatis virtus Deo gratissima est et animam perficit, quæ sanctitatis ut plurimum socia est : ita ut unus ex sanctis patribus interrogatus quisnam est sanctus, respondit, humilis et qui sanctior ? Humilior ; et qui sanctissimus ? humillimus, et qui se omnium minimum existimat, hic enim nihil sibi ipsi confidens, omnem suam fiduciam et spem in Deo collocatam habet.” — *Ph. Diez.*

us as a means whereby we may the more easily bridle the unruly affections of our corrupted nature.

(4) Because of the hope and assurance of a blissful abode in heaven which Christ gives to all who love Him. Tirinus.

In these words our Blessed Lord promises *rest* for the soul, not for the body nor the whole compound nature of man,¹ for in this life Christ does not free us from the burden of the Old Man, nor remove from us all worldly cares and anxieties; but what He promises and what He gives is rest for the soul, so that it shall not be overweighed and borne down by those sorrows which afflict us in this life. As our nature was made to love God, so it can find no true rest save in Him whom it was made to love. Worldly pleasures cannot yield it this rest: the prizes which are desired by worldly ambition cannot satisfy it. Only in Christ can the soul find rest: only by taking His easy yoke and light burden can it find true repose. Only those who are *meek and lowly in heart* can find rest. And those who are thus *meek and lowly in heart* do attain to *rest* here, the foretaste and anticipation of that endless *rest* which they shall possess in the world to come. Luca Brug.
Estius.
Simon de Cassia.
Mariana.

God calls each one of us to bear a yoke and to endure a burden. He takes away, indeed, the heaviest of all burdens, but in taking it away He adds another. Yet how different the burden which He takes away from that which He bids us take upon ourselves. He removes the burden of sin, compared to which all other burdens are light and of no account: He lays upon us, instead, the light burden of His commandments. He takes from us the yoke which binds us to this evil world, and He places upon us the easy and joyful yoke which binds us to God. He redeems us from the galling and degrading slavery of Satan, by making us the servants of God, whose service is, indeed, perfect freedom. He loads us with His benefits when He unbinds from our soul the grievous load of our sins. Barraclius.
Bernard in Ps. xv. Sermon.

(30) *For My yoke² is easy, and My burden is light.* Prov. iii. 17.
Wisd. viii. 16.

¹ "Quies promittitur in via et in patria. Qui enim jugum Christi cervicibus suis imponit, ab animi perturbationibus et cupiditatibus liberatus, quiescit; divinis consolationibus cœlestique gratia reficitur atque recreatur. Opponet aliquis: Christus animabus tantum, non corporibus requiem pollicetur; ergo pollicitatio hæc non convenit cœlesti patriæ, in qua etiam cor-

pora quiescunt. Respondemus Christum de animabus tantum locutum, quoniam hæc promissio ad hanc etiam vitam spectat, in qua corpora quiescere non possunt. Sed tamen si animæ quieverint, corpora etiam quiescent in cœlo. Sequuntur enim corpora animas."—Barraclius.

² "It is very remarkable, that Christ saith in the singular, *yoke*, for He doth

Acts xv. 10.
Gal. v. 1.
1 John v. 3.
Hilary.
Bede.
Alb. Magnus.

Luca Brug.

1 John v. 3.

Menochius.

Hammond's
Sermons.

Maldonatus.

Salmeron.

Wisdom v. 7.

Lienard.

Corn. & Lap.

The *yoke* which He would bind upon our shoulders is that of the Gospel—evangelical obedience and conformity to His will: the *burden* is the weight of God's commandments. This *yoke* is more than easy—it is good (*χρηστός*) for each of us to bear, and it is *easy* in itself.¹ By it Christ does not compel us to love, but He invites us with meekness and gentleness. *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.* It is the yoke of an easy, a loving master, and not that of a stern, inexorable tyrant.² It is *easy* now. The assertion is as to the present—it is (*ἔστι*) *easy*. Though there were no reward in the life to come, no glory, no peace hereafter, still, even then, it would be good for us to bear this gracious yoke.

The Gospel is an *easy* yoke—

(1) In respect to the law of Moses. The Gospel contains fewer precepts, and those easier of performance. It is not a law of fear and of severity, but one of filial love: whereas the Old Law was rigorous in itself, and made insupportable by the glosses and traditions of men.

(2) It is *easy* in comparison with the hard bondage which the servants of Satan endure—easy, compared with the yoke and the heavy burden of sin.

(3) It is *easy* by reason of that love which is infused into the soul, and which makes obedience to the precepts of the Gospel a light and pleasing task.³

(4) It is *easy*, as appealing to those who are not servants merely, but the children of God; and hence it speaks as unto loving children.

(5) It is *easy* because the end and the reward is higher—not temporal blessings, though the promise extends to bless-

not command us to plough with many yokes. The devil enticeth us to many vices which are contrary, the world hath many troubles which are contrary, the flesh also many desires which are contrary; but God hath upon the point but one commandment, namely, that we believe in His Son Jesus Christ [1 John iii. 23], and express this faith in loving one another."—Dean Boys.

¹ "We have rendered it imperfectly *My yoke is easy*; it signifies more richly, 'My yoke is a benign yoke,' all pleasure and profit, made up in the word *Κύριος χρηστός*, the Lord is gracious [1 Pet. ii. 3]: τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ [Rom. ii. 4] signifies the bounty—we render it *the goodness*—of

God, that which is immediately before us, the riches of His bounty, and proverbially the *εὐγὸς χρηστός*, a gracious, a bountiful yoke, a mine, a treasure of bounty, a good, a joyous, and a gainful yoke."—Hammond's Sermon on Matt. xi. 30.

² "Trahit volentes, non trahit qui nolunt."—Maldonatus.

³ "Energiam habet vocula, *Tollite*, quasi dicat, sine tergiversatione, alacriter et promptè, non formidine pœnæ sed Christi amore jugum Evangelicum suscipite. Non statim beatus ille, qui crucem habet sed qui tollit sublimiter; hæc enim beat portantes et erigit, quando ipsa sublimiter per amorem et charitatem extollitur."—Hartung.

ings in time. The end, however, which exceeds all temporal blessings, is eternal life.¹

The Gospel is called by our Blessed Lord a *yoke* and a *burden*, lest we presume upon His love: it is called *easy* and *light*² lest we should despair of His mercy. For as the way to eternal life, however full of happiness, is yet called *strait*, so is Christ's yoke a very real burden—at first, indeed, heavy and irksome—to the penitent, because it conflicts with his old habits of sin, and restrains the inclinations in which he once freely indulged. This burden, however, is made easy as the penitent grows day by day in holiness, and is at length wholly lightened by the conformity of his will to that new nature which is the fruit of his gradual sanctification.³

Euthymius.

Matt. vii. 14.

Dion. Carth.

This yoke Christ emphatically speaks of as His own yoke; that not only which He imposes, but which He also bears with us: for if He place it upon our necks, yet since a yoke connects, in doing so He thereby joins us to Himself and bears it with us, and so enables us to bear it the easier. For this reason, indeed, He first bore it for us, that it might be made *easy* to us. And in bearing it with us now, in giving us of His Divine strength to bear it, He makes it *easy* and *light* to us. If He commands us to fast, He first fasted for us. If He commands us to pray, He first set us the example by praying for us. If He bids us forgive, He first forgave those who rejected and crucified Him. In all He sets us an example, and gives us strength to do as He commands us.⁴

Corn. à Lap.

Paulus de Palacio.

Boya.

As sin is that which separates man from God, so is the yoke of Christ that which unites us to Him, that by which men, scattered and divided by the efforts of Satan, are

¹ "The ease of His yoke standeth not in bodily ease, nor the lightness of His burden standeth not in the slackness of any bodily pain, but it standeth in the sweetness of hope, whereby we feel in our pain a pleasant taste of heaven."—*Sir Thomas More, Dialogue on Heresies*, Book I. c. xviii.

² "Nonne et aviculas levat, non onerat, pennarum sive plumarum numerositas ipsa? Tolle eas et reliquum corpus pondere suo fertur ad ima. Sic disciplinam Christi, sic suave jugum, sic onus leve, quò deponimus, eò depri-mimur ipsi; quia portat potius quàm portatur."—*S. Bernard in Epist.* cccxli.

³ "Hæc sarcina non est pondus onerati, sed ala volaturi."—*S. Augus-*

tini Serm. xxiv. *De Verb. Apost.*

"Ubi amatur, non laboratur; vel, si laboretur, labor amatur."—*Ib.* Even Cicero could say, "Onus non est appellandum, quod cum lætitia feras et voluptate" [*in Verrem*, Actio v.].

⁴ "Tota Christianæ sapientiæ disciplina non in abundantia verbi, non in astutia disputandi, non in appetitu laudis et gloriæ, sed in vera et voluntaria humilitate consistit, quam Dominus Jesus ab utero matris usque ad supplicium crucis pro omni fortitudine elegit et docuit." "Tota victoria Salvatoris, quæ et diabolum stravit et mundum, humilitate est concepta, humilitate confecta."—*S. Leo.*

Ephes. i. 10. gathered into one, and made to become *one body*. And this yoke Christ bids us take upon ourselves. It is not to be forced upon us, we must *take* it of ourselves. Again, it is not enough to recommend it to others—it is not enough to proclaim the Gospel by words—we must do so by our example. We must not merely seek that others may become the children of God, but we must give up our own evil will: we must ourselves be really united and grafted into Him.

Salmeron.

*** “Domine Jesu Christe, da mihi per sanctam discipulorum Tuorum prædicationem sic gratia Tua edoceri, quòd non in vanitatibus vel quibuscumque elevationem et extollentiam mihi ingerentibus, sed in Tua cruce et singulis humilitatem in me excitantibus mihi libeat gloriari. Ipsa sancta doctrina

Evangelica in profunda humilitate et in omnibus virtutibus cor meum confirmet semper et corroboret: ut à vitiis purgatus et virtutibus ornatus merear in præsentì vita et in futura requiem animæ invenire; quia inquietum est cor meum, donec requiescat in Te, Jesu bone. Amen.”—*Ludolph*.

ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

ST. LUKE I. 26—38.

(26) *And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.*¹

THE whole of the circumstances which attended the incarnation of Christ, because of the importance of the event to man, are related with great minuteness. The messenger chosen to announce this mercy to man was an *angel*, for the Almighty would not deprive angelic natures of their part in the glories of the incarnation of Christ; and as the ruin of man's mortal nature, to be repaired by the work of the Incarnate Saviour, was the deed of a fallen angel, so did God at this time depute an *angel* to be the messenger of the tidings to man. And the name of this angel is significant, for *Gabriel* means the power of God—a fitting name for that messenger who came to announce the birth of Him who is *the Lord mighty in battle* against the armies of the alien, who should overthrow his rule who is chief amongst the principalities and powers of evil, the prince of *the dark-*

Arias Mont.
Alb. Magnus.
Ps. xli. 3.

¹ Nazareth probably derives its name from the Hebrew *netzer* (נֶצֶר), a branch. It is situated in a valley or basin of the hill country to the north of Esdraelon, and its fertility is attested by corn-fields and luxuriant pastures, by groves of olives and hedges of cactus even at the present day. The slopes of the hills on either side of the valley are in spring-time covered with brilliant wild flowers. Streams of water run down these slopes, and in winter-time, swollen to torrents, rush through the lower ground. From the hills, which rise to five hundred feet or more round the town, the traveller obtains a sight of Carmel and

of the Mediterranean Sea. On the north Lebanon and Hermon, and to the south the mountains of Samaria and the great flow of Esdraelon, whilst Gilead, Tabor, and Gilboa may be seen on the east and south-east. Nazareth is almost twenty miles from Ptolemais, eighteen from the Sea of Galilee, six from Mount Tabor, the same distance from Cana, and nine from Nain. It is some three days' journey from Jerusalem. The town or village still preserves its ancient name, and is known as En-Nazirah.—See *Robinson's Researches*, *Ritter's Palestine*, and *Kitto's Biblical Cyclopædia*.

Alex. Nat.
Ephes. vi. 12.

ness of this world, and should strengthen the nature of man to enable it to overcome all the temptations of Satan, the enticements of the world, and the importunate solicitations of the flesh.

Konigsteyn.

Dan. ix. 21.

St. Luke i.
19.

Beaux Amis.

Heb. i. 14.

Alex. Nat.

Toletus.

John iii. 16.
Soarez.

The angel Gabriel was sent from God. It was the same angel who had five hundred years before been chosen to inform Daniel of the time of the coming of the Messiah: the same who had been sent six months before to Jerusalem, and had made Zacharias acquainted with the conception, the character, the name, and the office of him who was to be the forerunner of the Incarnate Saviour.

And the angel Gabriel is said to be *sent* on this mission. The angels of God are, indeed, all of them *ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.* The evil angel came to Eve prompted only by his own malice, but the angel Gabriel, the messenger of good to man, comes not of himself, but *was sent from God.* He came on this mission *in the sixth month* after the conception of John, the forerunner of Christ, in the month Nizan.¹ According to a common tradition, the present state of things in the world was created in this month, but be this as it may, in this month man, after the Deluge, walked again upon the renewed earth, the figure and prophecy of that new earth which shall be the possession of man regenerated through the incarnation of Christ. In this month, again, the children of Israel were redeemed from the bondage of Egypt; so that as the typical redemption of God's people took place in this month, so Christ, who by the act of taking man's flesh redeemed mankind from slavery to Satan, became incarnate at this time. *The angel Gabriel was sent from God.* It was no merits of man, no importunities of sinners, no voice of supplication ascending to the throne of God, which drew down this mercy from on high; but *God gave His only begotten Son*, moved only by His own love and mercy towards mankind. And the conception of our Blessed Lord was in *a city of Galilee, named Nazareth*: in a city, full of the habitations of men, rather than in some lonely and solitary place, since He came to redeem man. In Nazareth of Galilee, where Jew and Gentile were intermingled, since

¹ "Annunciatio hæc Gabrielis et consequenter incarnatio Verbi contigit die xxv. Martii, quo pariter die Christus, post xxxiv. vitæ annos completos, pro salute hominum crucifixus et mortuus est. Eodem die multi censent mundum à Deo primitus fuisse conditum et creatum, Gens. i., ut eodem

die creatus sit à Deo, quo postea recreatus et restauratus fuit à Christo in incarnatione et cruce. Unde ab hoc die et hoc mense annos Christi inchoant et numerant Angli, Veneti, Pisani, pluresque aliæ nationes, et nuper Franci. Conceptio enim est quasi prima hominis nativitas."—*Corn. à Lapide.*

He came to unite them both in one fold, did the angel announce Him who was promised to Abraham as the blessing for both peoples, when God said, *In thy seed shall not only thy children, but all the nations of the earth be blessed.* To this Deliverer and Redeemer Jacob refers on his death-bed, when in blessing Judah he prophesied, *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be.* And in our Blessed Lord's conception in Nazareth, which was a small city of mean repute, rather than in any of the other cities of Canaan,¹ He leaves us a lesson of humility, and teaches us that those who would have Christ dwelling in their hearts must, like Him, be meek and lowly in life. His birth was not in Jerusalem, but in the little city Bethlehem. His first miracle was not in the Holy City, but in the insignificant village of Cana. He dwelt whilst on earth not in a royal city, but by the borders of the sea of Galilee, in Capernaum.

Stella.
Bonaven-
tura.
Gen. xxii. 18.

Gen. xlix. 10.
John i. 46;
vii. 41, 52.
Ludolph.

Alex. Nat.

Nazareth was a *city of Galilee*, in which country the people were mingled together, Jews and Gentiles. It was fitting, then, the birth of Him who came to make of these two one Church and to save all mankind should be announced, and that He should be conceived, in a region common to both Jews and Gentiles.

Stella.

As at the first, by the temptation of a fallen angel, Eve, the first woman, fell, so now does the Almighty Father make known the restoration of all things by the mission of an angel to a woman; in this, teaching us that the repentance and restoration of a sinner to that favour which he has despised and rejected must be through the selfsame way as that by which he has fallen.²

Stella.

(27) *To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph,³ of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.*

Matt. i. 18.
Luke ii. 4, 5.

¹ "Jesus in Nazareth, civitate parva, concipitur et nutritur; in Jerusalem, civitate solemni, patitur et crucifigitur. Et quid hoc, nisi quia salus in humilitate custoditur, in sublimitate periclitatur?" — *Hugo de S. Charo*. "In Judææ metropoli crucifigi, in exiguis et obscuris oppidulis concipi et nasci voluit, ut superbiam hominum confunderet humilitatis Magister. Humilitatem ama, ut Christum in anima tua concipias." — *Alex. Natalis*.

² "Juris regula singularis est, ut per
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easdem causas quibus aliquid sit, dissolvatur. Ita per easdem causas, quibus in mundum ingressa fuit mors, per easdem egreditur. Mors igitur mundum intravit propter dialogum habitum inter angelum et mulierem, vita itidem, ex simili colloquio, angeli, scilicet et mulieris. Et sicut per foeminam transgressio facta fuit (à muliere quippe initium omnis peccati est) ita per foeminam opus reparationis contigit."

— *Stella*.

³ "Quatuor sunt hujus nominis

Ambrose. *To a virgin, and so one yet free from connexion with man ; to a virgin espoused, and so not to be branded with a sullied virginity. She was espoused to Joseph—*

(1) That her fame and honour might not suffer from the reproach of men ; thus teaching us that an untarnished name and a spotless reputation in the eyes of men are not to be despised.

Stella. (2) That so she might be under the care and guardianship of a husband, who should defend her from wrong and reproach, and protect her in her flight into Egypt from the persecutions of Herod.

Ambrose. In mentioning the circumstance that Joseph and Mary were of the house of David, for the words apply to both the blessed Virgin and her espoused husband, reference is made to that prophecy in the Psalms, *The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David ; He will not turn from it ; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.*¹ And elsewhere : *Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth, even for ever. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*

Œcumenius.

Ps. cxxii.
ii.

Isa. ix. 7.

Jer. xxiii. 5.

So holy was this virgin, that she was worthy of the salvation of an angel and of being the mother of the Saviour of mankind. So lowly was she, that she was espoused to a poor carpenter. Those who are lowly in station like her, and humble in heart as she was, may also, like her, be holy.²

Alex. Nat.

Judges v. 24 ;
vi. 12.
Ruth ii. 4 ;
iii. 10.
Dan. ix. 23 ;
x. 19.
Judith xiii.
18.
2 Tim. iv. 22.

(28) *And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women.*

The angel came in—appearing in a human form, and coming

sancti celebres in Scriptura : filius Jacob, vir Mariæ, Joseph ab Arimathia, Joseph justus in Actibus Apostolorum. Primus in figuram Christi præcessit, secundus curam Parvulo exhibuit, tertius Mortuo sepulturam, quartus testimonium perhibuit Suscitato. In primo commendatur prudentia, quia omnia veraciter exposuit. In secundo temperantia, quia vir cum uxore continuit. In tertio fortitudo, quia audaciter ad Pilatum introivit ut pete-

ret corpus Jesu. In quarto justitia, quia justus etiam nominatur.”—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

¹ “ Πρὸς παρθένον (μεμνηστευμένην ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὄνομα Ἰωσήφ) ἐξ οἴκου Δαβίδ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς παρθένου Μαρίας.” —See *Whitby in loco.*

² “ Quanto profundior est puteus tanto ejus aqua dulcior est, et quanto humilior fueris tanto Deo gratior et jucundior.”—*Stella.*

into the apartment of the house where Mary was—and said, speaking to her with human speech, *Hail, thou that art highly favoured*, replete with spiritual gifts, and therefore well pleasing to God, abounding in sanctity, in humility, and in ready obedience, not gracious in the sight of God of herself, but made acceptable to God by the use of His gracious gifts bestowed on her.¹ *The Lord is with thee*, or, be with thee—not, that is, by His essential presence only, for in this manner He is everywhere; but He was with her by that incarnation about to take place in her. *With thee* in a higher sense than with the rest of the world; *with thee* as a son on earth with his mother. In calling her, then, *highly favoured*, the angel declared her fitness, by God's grace, to become the mother of the Redeemer; by adding, *The Lord is with thee*, he declares the mystery of the conception which was about to take place in her. Though, then, grace, the highest of all grace, was given to her in and by the act of the incarnation of Christ, yet she had before that time grace, making her acceptable in the sight of God, and causing her to be thus *highly favoured*—to be made the mother of the Lord.

Blessed art thou among women—inter mulieres—since God has given to thee the blessing promised to woman, and thou shalt possess a child. Blessed also *in mulieribus*—above all other women, since thou shalt bring forth the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. She was blessed above all other women, whether we regard these words as spoken of that grace and humility which was found in her antecedent to this signal mark of God's favour and approval, or whether the blessedness spoken of only had reference to the fact that she was chosen to be the mother of her Lord. She possessed a fulness of grace exceeding that of the Baptist, of whom it was said, *He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb*: or of St. Stephen, of whom we read that he was *full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*, since she was brought nearest to Christ, the Author and Source of all grace.²

¹ "*Gratia plena*. Græcè uno verbo tantum dicitur, *κεχαριτωμένη*; hoc est, ad literam, gratificata: estque participium passivum verbi *χαριτίζω*, quo utitur Paulus ad Ephes. i. 6, dum ait, *In qua gratificavit nos in dilecto Filio Suo*; atque hic illam significat quam gratuita Sua bonitate Deus gratam et charamet acceptam habuit."—*Salmeron*. "Gratia soli Deo debetur, non progenitoribus, nec industriæ personæ,

gratia enim dicitur quoniam gratis datur à Deo."—*Soarez*.

See also the note of Hammond upon this verse.

² "Plena dicitur gratia, non ex parte ipsius gratiæ, quam non habuit in summa excellentia qua potest haberi, nec ad omnes gratiæ effectus, sed per comparisonem ad ipsam, quia sufficientem habuit ad illum statum ad quem fuit electa, scilicet ut esset mater Dei.

God is spoken of in Holy Scripture as with man in three ways—

(1) He is with man by way of assistance, protection, or defence. Thus He says to Israel, *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.* Or again, in similar words He encourages Jeremiah when alarmed at the strength of his enemies, *Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.*

Isa. xli. 10.

Jer. i. 8.

Salmeron.

(2) He is with man by grace, dwelling in man and uniting man to Himself by the Spirit given to man. Thus, when the angel says, *Thou art highly favoured*, he immediately adds, *The Lord is with thee*; for where grace is absent there is God absent; where grace is, there is God present; there is no interval between the one and the other, so that to give grace to man is the same as saying that God dwells in man.

Isa. vii. 14.
Matt. i. 23.

(3) God is with man, our Immanuel, by taking man's nature, and so being united to man. Thus, the incarnation of the Eternal Word was foretold by Isaiah in these words, *A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.*

Toletus.

In these three ways was God with the blessed Virgin. The whole Godhead was there. The power of the Almighty Father overshadowing, protecting, and assisting her; the Holy Ghost, which was to come upon her with His especial grace; and the Eternal Son, who was not only to dwell with her, but whose body was to be conceived in her womb and to be born of her.

(29) *And when she saw him,¹ she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.²*

She was troubled, either—

Ambrose.

(1) At the sight of the heavenly messenger and at the

Sic Stephanas plenus (Act. vi.) dicitur gratia, quam sufficientem habuit, ut esset testis idoneus Christi. Sic et Apostoli (Acto. ii.)."—*Konigstejn in loco.*

¹ "Videre de omnibus sensibus dicitur, ob excellentiam visus."—*Mariana.*

² "All things in the case of the blessed Virgin, both what was foretold to herself, and what ensued subse-

quently, befell her without her expecting them. But if her full conception, as the tradition of several members of the Roman Church represents, had been immaculate, she could have hardly accounted herself, however superlatively modest, so entirely undistinguished from ordinary men and women."—*Bengel.*

glory of that celestial vision which was then opened to her eyes; troubled, it may be, as Daniel was when, by the river Hiddekel, he saw a great vision, *and there remained no strength in him*; or with that fear mingled with *great joy* which the two Marys felt when they saw the angels at the empty sepulchre of Christ, *and were afraid and bowed down their faces to the earth.* Alb. Magnus. Dan. x. 8. Matt. xxviii. 8. Luke xxiv. 5.

(2) Or at the unusual salutation of the angel, and at the greatness of that favour which was about to be shown to her. Chrysostom. Alb. Magnus.

(30) *And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.* Gen. vi. 8; xxxix. 4.

*She was troubled at the greatness of the favour shown to her.*¹ Thus different was it with the blessed Virgin than with the rest of the world. When she was saluted with honour, *she was troubled*: when we receive honour, we rejoice. When she was exalted, then was she most lowly: when we are lifted up, then most are we tempted by pride. She feared because she was so full of grace: we are confident when we have least of that same grace of God. Soarez.

It was the common belief amongst the Jews that the appearance of an angel was a mark of some coming calamity, or even of approaching death; thus, when the angel appeared to Manoah and his wife and told them of the birth of Samson, *Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.* In order to reassure Mary, who was troubled at his coming, he removes the cause of fear from her mind by these words. Lamy. Judges xiii. 22.

And the words “to find favour” do not imply, as some have imagined, that Mary had made some discovery—that she had found that favour which was lost by Eve; this is merely a Hebrew form, meaning “Thou art favoured,” or “art well-pleasing, in the sight of God;” as when we read, *Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord*; or again, when we read of Joseph, that he *found grace in the sight of his master*; and of Esther, that *she obtained grace and favour in the sight of Ahasuerus more than all the virgins.* And the grace or favour which Mary had found was this, that she was chosen of God to be the mother of the Redeemer.² Alb. Magnus. Theophylact. Gen. vi. 8. Barradius. Gen. xxxix. 4. Esther ii. 17. Bonaventura.

¹ “Cur ait Angelus: *Ne timeas Maria?* Resp. non Sanctum ab ea timorem expellere voluisse, qui preciosissimum est Dei donum, sed aliquis est timor, qui ut ait D. Damascenus vocatur agonia: et est perplexitas quædam, quæ in arduis negotiis animum

mysterii, quæ offertur sublimitate extollit, et stupidum reddit et de hoc timore loquitur.”—Ph. Diez.

² “*Invenisti gratiam apud Deum.* Invenisti, non meruisti, non emisti, quia jam non esset gratia, sed gratis accepisti, et ideo gratiam invenisti.”—

With reason the angel begins his salutation with grace or favour, and continues to speak of grace in its consummation. The whole incarnation of Christ is an act of grace, not of nature, and springs from the love and mercy of God, and neither from the merits nor deservings of man. It is given to man by grace, and is the source of all grace to sinners.

Barradius.

Isa. vii. 14.
Matt. i. 21.
Luke ii. 21.

(31) *And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus.*

Luca Brug.

Origen.

And. The sign, that is, that thou hast found favour with God is this, that thou shalt *conceive* and shalt bear the Son of God; for whatever favour she had found before by the holiness of her life, she was now to receive a far larger measure of that blessedness and favour by being made the mother of the Son of God.

Jansen Yp.

Beaux Amis.

Isa. vii. 14.

Jansen Yp.

Thou shalt conceive. Thus does the angel assert the true humanity of that Christ who was to be born, that human flesh which He took of the substance of His mother, as any other child, so far as the mother was concerned; for as our Blessed Lord was Very God begotten of Very God from eternity, as to His Divine nature, so was He, when born into this world, truly Man by a true conception of the blessed Virgin. And when it is added, *Thou shalt call His name Jesus*, this is not in contradiction to what had been prophesied of old as to His name Immanuel. He was Immanuel, inasmuch as He was a Man living among men, doing His wonders in the sight of men, being a living example to men, and distributing gifts to them from God. He was Jesus the Saviour, who, by the merits and effects of His blood, should save His people from their sins.¹

Heb. ii. 17.

Theophylact.

These words, then, tell us that our Blessed Lord's body was one of real flesh, and that He was *made like unto His brethren*, and resembled other men. This declaration overthrows various heresies:—

Hugo de S. Charo. Apud Deum, non apud mundum, ubi sæpe gratia falsa est. Apud Deum, non apud homines: nam apud homines gratia fallax est.—*Bald. Junius.*

¹ “Duos Jesus lego, in typo Hujus quem nunc in manibus habemus, præcessisse, ambos populis præfuisse: quorum unus populum suum de Babylone eduxit [3 Esd. ii. 5], alter suum in terram promissionis introduxit [Josh. xxi. 23]. Et illi quidem illos, quibus

præerant, ab hostibus defendebant; sed nunquid salvabant à peccatis eorum? Is autem noster Jesus et à peccatis salvat populum Suum et introduxit in terram viventium; *Ipse enim salvum faciet populum Suum à peccatis eorum* [Matt. i. 21]. *Quis est Hic qui etiam peccata dimittit?* Utinam et me peccatorem dignetur Dominus Jesus annu-merare populo Suo, ut salvum me faciat à peccatis meis.”—*Bernard, Homilia iii. super Missus est, § xi.*

(1) That of the Valentinians, who asserted that though Christ's body was a real body, yet that, though born of the blessed Virgin, it derived no part of its substance from her, and that she was only the medium or channel through which it passed.

Tertullian,
De Carne
Christi.
Irenæus, lib.
c. 32.

(2) That of the Apollinarians, who said that the body of Christ came from heaven, whereas here we read that it was both conceived and brought forth by the blessed Virgin.

(3) That of Marcion and of the Manichæan sects in general, who said that He had only the outward form and semblance of a body. On the contrary, we find here that as the womb of the blessed Virgin was real, so was His conception in that womb real, and His birth from that womb also real.

Athanasius,
De Assumpt.

(4) That of the Nestorians, who are charged with saying that what was born of the blessed Virgin was simply man, and that to this humanity was afterwards united the nature of God, thus making two persons in Christ, instead of two natures hypostatically united in one person. But here we are clearly taught that she conceived and brought forth Jesus, who is God: for though she did not conceive the Divine nature, yet is she not less the mother of God, since the father of a child is not less truly the father, though he be-
gats not the soul of the child, but the body only.¹

Theophylact.

Damascen.
liv. c. 12.
Beaux Amis.

Cyrl.

(32) *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.*

2 Sam. vii. 12.
Ps. cxxxii. 11.
Isa. ix. 6, 7;
xvi. 5;
liv. 5.
Jer. xxiii. 5.
Amos ix. 11.
Rev. iii. 7.

By the coming of Christ into the world He shall be recognised as the Lord, and shall be called *the Son of the Highest*; for before the coming of the Son no man knew God as the Father, and, therefore, knew not this second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity as the Son. And when He comes He

Stella.

¹ This argument of S. Cyril is not of weight unless the theory of the separate pre-existence of the soul is first granted to be true, and we assume that at the conception of the body such soul, having already an individuality of its own, was then united to the body, and from that time constituted one person; and that such being the case, the husband is termed father of both these different natures. Of the genesis of the soul, however, we know nothing, and hence there appears little force in the argument from analogy of

S. Cyril. A man is spoken of as the father of the whole conjoint person, because it is popularly believed that the soul has not an existence separate from and independent of the body before conception, but that in some manner, to us inexplicable, it arises out of, or is dependent upon, the act by which the body began to be. However true the dogma itself is, and however correct the name, *mother of God*, the argument made use of lends no support to the truth itself.

shall sit on the throne of David—shall be acknowledged, that is, as the Messiah, the Son promised of old to David. Thus is the fulness of His nature revealed, since He is to be recognised not only as the Son of Mary and of David, which He was after the flesh, but also as the Son of the Most High God, because of the nature of God, in which He had ever shared.

(1) *He shall be called the Son of the Highest*—the Son of God, and therefore God. The words are not, *He shall be the Son of the Highest*, but *He shall be called so*, and that not without meaning. Had the words of the angel been, “He shall be the Son of the Highest,” there might seem some ground for saying that *shall be* meant, He shall begin to be *the Son of the Highest*, by His birth and adoption into God’s family; but *shall be called* is appropriate to One who was and is ever the eternal Son of the Father,¹ existing before He was so *called*, and, when made known to men, then because of His actions called and owned to be *the Son of the Highest*; declared so by His life, by His miracles, by His doctrine, so that men were forced to confess, *Truly this Man was the Son of God*. In these words the Divinity of Christ seems to be implied. And these words were fulfilled not only after His ascension, by the homage and belief of the Christian world, but during His life on earth—at His baptism, by a voice from heaven saying, *This is My beloved Son*; by a voice out of the cloud, at His transfiguration, saying the same words; by the confession of men, as when Peter said, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*; and when the centurion confessed, in the words just cited, *Truly this Man was the Son of God*.² The same truth was not only uttered by the Father from heaven, and by men on earth; it was wrung reluctantly from evil spirits also, as at Capernaum, when the unclean spirit cried out in the synagogue, *I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God*; and another, in the country of the Gadarenes, who cried and said, *Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God, I adjure Thee by God, that Thou torment me not*.

Toletus.

Sylveira.

Mark xv. 39.

Matt. iii. 17.

Luke ix. 35.

Matt. xvi. 16.

Mark xv. 39.

Mark i. 24.

Mark v. 7.

¹ “Sapienter dictum est *vocabitur*, et non *erit*, ne quis Filium Dei adoptionis intelligeret, qui de novo fieret et ante non esset, propterea dixit *vocabitur*; nam Filius Altissimi ab æterno est, neque propterea quod novam accipit nativitatem de novo est, aut incipit esse. Usus etiam est angelus eo verbo, ut simul indicaret fidem populorum qui Filium Dei, non hominem tantum sed etiam, ut vere est, Filium Dei in carne,

et credituri corde, et ore prædicaturi erant.”—Toletus.

² “Vocandus erat Filius Altissimi, primum quidem à Patre, qui primum in baptismo, deinde in transfiguratione; *Hic*, inquit, *est filius Meus dilectus*: deinde et ab hominibus, divinitatem Ejus ex doctrina Ejus cœlesti et miraculis propria potestate editis, colligentibus et credentibus.”—Jansen Gand.

(2) He shall sit on *the throne of His father David*, and therefore He shall be man; for the promise is, that the Almighty Father shall give to the God-Man, Christ Jesus, by virtue of that humanity which He had taken from the blessed Virgin, the throne of David, His father after the flesh.

Beda.

Beaux Amis.

He shall be great.

Of John it had been predicted, *He shall be great in the sight of the Lord*; but of Christ it is said, *He shall be great*, and the Lord, *the Son of the Highest*. The Baptist was to be great as man and as the forerunner of Christ; the Saviour was great as Man, united in mysterious union to God. For these words are spoken of the incarnate life of Christ, which was then future. *He shall be great*—as soon, that is, as He shall begin to be. *Great*, that is, not in Himself as the God of power, and *great* in His eternal generation as *the Son of the Highest*, for these words are spoken of His human nature, but *great* in His regal dignity; for the Almighty Father *shall give unto Him the throne of His father David*. *Great*—no weak infant merely, no feeble man: *great*, because of the greatness of that people over whom He shall rule, for *He shall reign over the house of Jacob*, the whole spiritual Israel of God: and *great*, also, because of the duration and extent of His rule, for it shall be unbounded; it shall be over the whole earth and heaven, and unlimited by time; it shall be both eternal, and reaching to the ends of the whole earth: *great* in His deeds and in His teaching. The greatness of the Virgin's Son, then, consists—

Luke i. 15.

Barradius.

Haymo.

Gorranus.
(Ecumenius).

(1) In the greatness of His nature—the exaltation of the humanity of Christ through the hypostatic union with God.

(2) In the greatness of His office as the Redeemer of mankind; the Deliverer from the slavery of Satan.

Chemnitz.

(3) In the greatness of His rule and sovereignty over the whole Church, which is placed in subjection to Him, by virtue of His humiliation and incarnation.

(4) In the greatness of that rule, which shall extend throughout eternity.¹

Quesset.

¹ “ Absolutè magnus, et non coram Domino, ut dixerat de Joanne: et absolutè magnus, non secundùm quid, sive secundùm partem—id est secundùm sapientiam, ut Solomon: vel secundùm prophetiam, ut David: vel secundùm fortitudinem, ut Sampson: vel secundùm pulchritudinem, ut Absolon: sed absolutè magnus, quia non tantum homo sed etiam Deus: nec

tantum Deus sed etiam homo, nobilitate, novitate, atque utilitate maximus. Est enim magnus substantia, quia Deus, qui dicitur à Damasceno esse pelagus infinitæ substantiæ: magnus quantitate, quia omnia potest et omnia implet: magnus qualitate, quia summum bonum: magnus relatione, quia Filius Dei: magnus in temporis sive præteriti sive futuri duratione, quia

(5) He is great as the one perfect Pattern by whom all men are to fashion their lives.

(6) He is great, finally, as greatly magnifying the Father, so that kings and nations through Him are brought nigh to God, and are taught to adore Him.¹

Bernard.

And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.

And this kingdom over which our Blessed Lord rules, and which was given to Him by the Father because of the incarnation of the Eternal Son, because of His humiliation in taking upon Him the nature of man, is called the *throne* or kingdom of David. It is so called—

Corn. & Lap.

(1) Because the promise was made of old to David that his seed should possess it: for Christ's coming was the fulfilment of a promise made to David.

(2) Because the kingdom of Christ—the Church which He had come to establish in all the world—had its beginning among that people over whom David ruled, for He declared Himself, *I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

Matt. xv. 24.
Luca Brug.

(3) Because the kingdom of Christ was foreshadowed by that of David, as His person was typified by the person of that king.

Dion. Carth.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.
Hosea iii. 5.

(4) Because, according to His manhood, He was descended in the right line from David.

Leigh.

æternus: magnus in prædicamento Ubi, quia cælum et terram implet: magnus situ, quoniam ait, *Cælum sedes Mea, terra autem scabellum pedum Meorum* [Isa. lxvi. 1]: magnus habitu, quia *Dominus regnavit, decorem indutus est; indutus est Dominus fortitudinem, et præcinxit se* [Ps. xciii. 1]; et alibi *amictus lumine sicut vestimento*: magnus in actione, quia *in principio creavit Deus cælum et terram* [Gen. i. 1]: magnus in passione, quia *novissimus virorum, vir dolorum, et sciens infirmitatem* [Isa. liii. 3] qui mundum universum Sua patientia servabit." —

Salmeron.

¹ "*Erit magnus.* Magnus Deus, magnus homo, magnus doctor, magnus propheta, magnus sacerdos; magnus erit, magna faciet, quia potens est, et sanctum nomen ejus. Et verè sanctum, quia filius Altissimi vocabitur; vel ideò dicit *erit magnus*, quia primò factus est parvus, sicut dicitur; *Parvulus natus est nobis, ut nos.* Magnos efficeret. Et in hoc qualiter possimus magni fieri ostendit, scilicet si primò fiamus parvuli sicut Ipse quia, *qui se humiliat exaltabitur.*" — *Hugo de S. Charo.*

(33) *And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.*

We have seen that by *the throne of David* is to be understood the spiritual power of the Messiah, figured to us by the temporal power which David had; so by *the house of Jacob* we are to understand the spiritual people of God, the Church of Christ, as represented by the family of Jacob after the flesh. That people of whom God had spoken to Jacob in vision saying, *Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed*; so that by *the house of Jacob* is meant the congregation of God's faithful people—all those who tread in the steps of Jacob and who believe in the God of Israel—in whom Christ now reigns by grace, and who shall hereafter reign with Him in glory.

The promise is not that He shall reign over the house of Abraham nor over that of Isaac, since in both these families the eldest son was rejected; but the promise is to the house of Israel, all of whose sons were members of the covenant and fathers of the tribes of Israel.¹ And His rule is not to be over a divided *house*, over some only of the twelve tribes—there is to be no longer the vexings of Judah against Israel and of Israel against Judah; but His rule shall be over one united fold—over all the tribes of Israel—and over all those who shall be grafted into the stock from which those who rejected Christ were cut off.

He shall reign *for ever* and *without end*. By some these words are taken to be a repetition, for the sake of emphasis and to guard against any possible limitation of the duration of Christ's kingdom; and that lest *for ever* should be understood to mean only for a long time, there was added *without end*, in order to assure us that it should endure in this present condition of time and throughout eternity. Others,

1 Chron. xxii. 10.
Ps. xlv. 6;
lxxxix. 37;
cxxxii. 12.
Isa. ix. 7;
xiv. 1;
xvi. 5.
Jer. xxiii. 5.
Dan. ii. 44;
vii. 14, 27.
Obad. 21.
Micah iv. 7.
John xii. 34.
1 Cor. xv. 24.
Heb. i. 8;
xii. 28.
Salmeron.
Beaux Amis.

Gen. xxviii. 14.

Arias Mont.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

Alb. Magnus.

Isa. xi. 13.

Bede.

Jansem Yp.

¹ "Non ait in domo Abraham, in qua Ismael pugnat cum Isaac—id est, carnalis cum spirituali et Paganus cum fidei: nec in domo Isaac, ubi Esau pilosus et terrenus persequitur Jacob, qui supplantavit eum in utero, surripuitque ei paternam benedictionem ac primogenituram: nec in domo Juda, de qua oriundus erat: verum super universam domum Jacob, et super universos filios Israel quorum omnium pater fuit Jacob: etsi enim illorum

quidam peccaverint, egerunt tamen poenitentiam. Erat autem domus Jacob sanctior cæteris, sicut sedes David justior reliquis. Et sicut per sedem David intelligimus spiritualem Messiae in illa Davidis, in temporali sede, figuratam potestatem; ita per domum Jacob intelligimus populum Dei spiritualem et Christi Ecclesiam in illa domo carnali Jacob representatam."—*Salmeron*.

Toletus.

Barradius.

Stella.

Ludolph.
Salmeron.Geometer.
Jans. Gand.

Corn. & Lap.

Heb. II. 17, 18;
iv. 15.

Sylvestra.

however—and as it seems more properly—take these words as affirmative of two distinct things; and that, when it is predicated of Christ's kingdom that it shall endure *for ever*, any limitation as to time is excluded, and we are assured that Christianity shall not give place to any future development, such as when the synagogue gave place to the Church and the law was completed in the Gospel; but that, when it is added, that *of His kingdom there shall be no end*, the reference is to the extent of Christ's rule; and we are hereby assured that it shall not only reach and embrace all people, but that both men and angels shall be comprised within its limits, and that even the powers of darkness shall be subject to His control.¹

The *reign* and *kingdom* of Christ here mentioned is that which is possessed by Him as man, that which was given to the Son when He took man's nature of the blessed Virgin, and which is to be His *for ever*, since that nature, which He has united to the Godhead, He will never lay aside. This rule our Blessed Lord took not to Himself, but it was given to Him by the Father—

(1) It was given by the Father to the Son at His incarnation.

(2) This *reign* and *kingdom* began with the teaching of Christ; it was continued by the preaching of the Apostles whom He commissioned for that purpose; it was perfected at His resurrection and ascension into heaven; and will be acknowledged by all beings, created and uncreated, when He shall judge mankind at the last day.

As the whole of human nature was to be exalted in the person of Christ by His resurrection and ascension, and as also the sufferings of the human race were sanctified by the sufferings of Christ, He willed to take upon Himself all the infirmities and sorrows of man, and to be made like to His brethren in all things. He became, therefore, an infant, that infants also might share with others in all the benefits of the incarnation.²

He shall reign by the laws which He writes in the hearts

¹ “Omnium regnorum finis est; finis, inquam, tam temporis quam loci. Nullum enim regnum æternum in terris est: nullum totius orbis fines complectitur. At Christi regnum omni fine, tam temporis, quam loci, caret. *Dominabitur à mari usque ad mare et à flumine usque ad terminos orbis terrarum* [Ps. lxxii. 8]: usque ad terminos quoque orbis cœlorum in sempiternum.” —Barradius.

² “Ecce parvulus in medio statuitur. O Parvulus parvulis desideratus! O Verè Parvulus: sed malitiâ, non sapientiâ! Studeamus effici sicut parvulus iste; discamus ab Ipso, quia mitis est et humilis corde; ne magnus videlicet Deus sine causa factus sit homo parvus, ne gratis mortuus, ne in vacuum crucifixus.” —Bernard, *Homilia* iii. super *Missus est*, § 14.

of all His faithful people by the work of the Spirit, and which He makes known to all by the word of prophecy—the preaching of the Gospel in all parts of the world. He shall reign, not as David did for seven years over Judah and Benjamin alone, nor as the successors of Solomon did over a portion only of the tribes, but He shall rule over the whole *house of Jacob*, the great body and family of the faithful children of Israel. And the kingdom of Christ is called a *house*—

(1) Because as the head of the family has the sole right of rule in the household, so has Christ the sole lawful authority in His kingdom.

(2) As a *house* is a place for dwelling in, so is the Church of Christ inhabited, protected, and sanctified by His presence.

(3) This word *house* certifies us of the loving and familiar union which each member of the family of God has with the Father of that family, the Master of that *house*.

(34) *Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?*

This question does not indicate any want of faith, but rather implies her belief in what the angel had just announced to her. She asks not how she shall know of the truth of this, but asks only how it is to take place;¹ how God will accomplish that which it was beyond her power to comprehend. Her question, then, is very different from that which was asked by Zacharias, *Whereby shall I know this?* for in asking, *How shall this be?* she accepts the fact that it certainly will come to pass, and asks only the manner of its being accomplished.

(35) *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, in order—

(1) That He might make her meet and worthy to be the mother of our Lord; for however *highly favoured* before by

¹ “*Quomodo fiet istud?* Prudenter interrogavit, non ut Eva nimium credula de qua dici potest: *Qui credit citò levis corde est et minorabitur.* Utinam Eva sic dixisset ad serpentem divinitatem promittentem: quomodo potest pomum manducatum Deos omnia scientes efficere? Profectò et sibi, et nobis melius consulisset.” — *Salmeron*.

spiritual graces, she yet needed the presence of the Holy Spirit for this great privilege, that He might sanctify that body from which our Blessed Lord was to take the substance of His flesh.

Bonaventura.

(2) He came in order that He might sanctify her conception—the body which our Blessed Lord was to take to Himself—making it free from all taint and corruption of original sin.

Toletus.

The power of the Highest. A question has arisen amongst the best commentators as to the meaning of this phrase.

E.g. Euthymius,
Maldonatus.
Luke xxiv.
49.
Luke xi. 20.

(1) By some, *the power of the Highest* is understood to mean *the Holy Ghost*, the *power from on High*, or the *finger of God*, as He is elsewhere called by our Lord Himself, so that this clause is but a repetition of the preceding one.

E.g. Gregory,
Chrysostom,
Damascen.,
Theophylact.
1 Cor. i. 24.

(2) Others, however, understand by *the power of the Highest*, the Second Person in the ever-blessed Trinity—*Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God*; for in His coming into this world His own will was shown: and if it be true that He was *sent*, still it is equally true that He *came*, not compelled by one external to Himself, but moved by His own love to mankind.¹

E.g. Bruno.

(3) Others, again, understand by these words, *the power of the Highest*, that power which is common to the whole three Persons in the Godhead; and that so far forth as His human nature is concerned, the Redeemer is from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, whilst as regards the Divine nature He is from the Father alone.

The largest number of commentators interpret these words of the Eternal Son, and one distinguished theologian says, that this must be so, as otherwise there would be no relevancy in the words which follow—*that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*; because this would not necessarily follow from the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, since the Holy Spirit visits the hearts of men and is present for other reasons than this.

Estius.

The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.

John i. 4—9.

The Lord, in His Divinity, is Light; and because the incorporeal Light of Godhead is to take to itself the flesh of man in the womb of the Virgin, the angel declared to her

¹ “Vide cooperantem sibi invicem Trinitatem. Spiritus Sanctus venire dicitur super Virginem, et virtus Altissimi obumbrare ei. Quæ est autem virtus Altissimi nisi Ipse Christus, qui est Dei virtus et Dei sapientia? Cujus autem hæc virtus est? Altissimi inquit. Adest ergo Altissimus, adest et virtus Altissimi, adest et Spiritus Sanctus. Hæc est Trinitas ubique latens, et ubique apparens, vocabulis personisque discreta, inseparabilis vero substantia Deitatis.” —*Ruffinus in Expos. Sym.*

that *the power of the Highest* would overshadow her.¹ The incorporeal Light of Deity should receive the body of humanity in her, and the flesh of man should become, as it were, a shadow tempering and hiding the glory of that light; for the flesh which Christ took of the substance of the blessed Virgin—like a cloud or shadow—concealed the brightness of the Sun which no man could look on with the eyes of the body and live; so true is it that though our Blessed Lord revealed Himself to us by His coming upon earth, yet in the very fulness of that revelation He is still a God that hideth Himself. He is so to all men, but especially was He so to His virgin mother, who might not have been able to endure the uncreated majesty of God and the glory of the incorporeal brightness of the Divine nature, had He not clothed Himself in flesh and overshadowed for her the uncreated light of His presence.²

Gregory.

Gregory
Nassen, De
Nativ. Dei.Hugo de S.
Chiaro.

Yngas.

Isa. xlv. 15.

Bernard.
Serm. xxxi.
in Cant.

Rightly, indeed, is the flesh of Christ spoken of as a shadow, not only because it shrouded from mortal eyes the brightness of Divinity and enabled man to look upon it and yet live, but also because as the shadow cast from a body is the inseparable companion of the substance from which it is cast, so is the flesh of Christ which veils the Godhead inseparably united to the Divine nature, since our Blessed Lord has taken to Himself the nature of mortal man never to lay that nature aside. And this body was created especially by God for this union; for as He at the first created the body of man, so now does He create the body which is to redeem man from sin, that so the Creator and the Redeemer of man may be manifested to all as one God.

Origen, lib. ii.
περί ἀρχῶν,
c. vi.Irenæus,
iv. c. vi.

Therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

He was not only to be the true Son of the Virgin Mary, since He received His flesh from her substance, but He was also to be the Son of the Eternal God—not only, that is, to have a human, but also a Divine nature.

Toletus.

Holy thing. Not merely, that is, sanctified and made holy and free from human corruption, but He was that which is in itself holy. And our Blessed Lord is significantly spoken

Cajetan.

¹ “*Obumbrabit tibi. Carnem tuam sanctificatam verbo personaliter uniendo.*” — *Gorranus*. “*Primum mundavit eam ab omni peccato deinde omnem statum concupiscentiæ abstulit.*” — *Haymo*.

² “*Ne ad introitum divinitatis humana fortasse infirmitas non subsisteret, venerandam omnibus virginem*

virtus Altissimi roboravit, ut corpoream imbecillitatem circumfusa umbræ suæ protectione firmaret, et ad consummandum conceptus sacri inenarrabile sacramentum humana infirmitas non deficeret, quam divina obumbratio sustineret.” — *Cassian. De Incarnatione Christi*, lib. ii. cap. 2.

Bernard.

of indefinitely as the *holy thing*, not merely holy flesh, not a holy man, a holy infant, but that which the Virgin was to conceive and bring forth—the Child, the flesh, the mind—all was to be holy—the Sanctified, the Sanctifier.

Jans. Gand.

Barradius.

Toletus.

He was, indeed, to be born of her substance, and so to be Very Man; but He was to be *called* not the son of any man, not the son of Mary merely, not the son of Joseph, but the *Son of God, the Son of the Highest*, because He shall be born not of man, nor of the will of man, but by the power of the Blessed Trinity. But though the body of Christ was conceived by the power and operation of the Holy Spirit, yet is the third person in the Trinity in no way to be esteemed the Father of Christ Jesus, since He is of a different nature to that body which was created. He begat not the body of Christ, but He caused the blessed Virgin, without a husband, to conceive that body.

(36) *And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth,¹ she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.*

Exod. vi. 23.

Œcumenius.

Although it was the usual practice that marriages should take place only between members of the same tribe, yet this was not an invariable rule, as is evident from the cases of Aaron and Jehoiada, both high priests, and therefore of the tribe of Levi, who each took to himself a wife from the tribe of Judah. This would seem to have been the case with an ancestor of the blessed Virgin, who had married into the tribe of Levi; hence it was that Elizabeth, or at least her husband, who was of this tribe, was *cousin* to one of the royal tribe.² So that He who in His Divine nature was the great High Priest, and in His human nature was *King of kings and Lord of lords*, should be connected with both these tribes, and that His priesthood should be evidently regal whilst His kingship is sacerdotal.

¹ “*Cognata tua.* Certa est cognatio inter Mariam et Elisabet: sed incertum est quo modo. Genealogias enim earum secundum utrumque sexum certas nescio. Hoc tamen certum in sacra scriptura est quod domus Davidis mixta erat cum domo Aaron: uxor enim Joiadæ Pontificis fuit soror Ochoziæ regis Juda: ut patet in 2 libro Reg. Unde nihil obstat huic cognationi quod Elisabet fuerit de tribu Levi ac filiabus Aaron, beata autem Virgo de tribu Juda ac filiabus Davidis.”—*Cajetan.*

² Haymo, citing these two cases, says: “Potuit etiam fieri ut recentiori tempore fieret conjunctio in tribu Juda et Benjamin, unde beata Maria et Elizabeth descenderunt. Rectè namque Dominus de regia et sacerdotali stirpe dicitur descendisse, quia Ipse et Rex regum et Dominus dominantium est et Sacerdos cui dicitur: *Tu es Sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedech.*” Vide et S. Augustinum, *Lib. Quæstionum in libros Judicum*, cap. xlvii. *Lib. Octoginta trium Quæst.*

In these words the angel confirms to Mary the truth of that which he had just announced to her, that she should conceive a son, supernaturally, by pointing out the fact that Elizabeth was also by supernatural power about to give birth to a son; strengthening her faith by this example, and assuring her that He, who had done such great things for Elizabeth, would yet do greater things for her. He does not call to her mind the instances of similar mercies to others of old time, as to Sarah, but he points to her cousin as a living testimony to the power of God. And in adding these words—who *was called* or acknowledged by all to be *barren*—the angel points still to the proof of God's power as not only to give a child to one who had reached old age, but who had never yet given birth to a child.

Cajetan.

Ambrose.

Barradius.

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Gen. xviii. 14.

(37) *For with God nothing shall be impossible.*

The words here made use of are those addressed by God to Abraham, when the birth of Isaac was foretold. In so using them the angel points to the miraculous birth of him who was the type of Christ, and thus confirms the faith of Mary.

Olshausen.

Everything, that is, which He declares by His word (ῥῆμα¹) He is able to fulfil; so that neither barrenness nor old age on the one hand, nor virginity on the other, can hinder that which is indeed beyond nature, but which the God of nature has determined to bring to pass.

Dion. Carth.
Salmeron.

(38) *And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*²

In these words we have the epitome of the virtues of the blessed Virgin. *Behold*—in this is shown her obedience; in calling herself *the handmaid of the Lord*, we see her humility; *be it unto me according to thy word* is the breathing of her fervid hope and confidence in God, and her perfect submission to His will. It is her prayer, as though in anticipation of the prayer of her Son—*Not My will, but Thine be done*. It must be the prayer of every one of those who

Ludolph.

¹ ῥῆμα. "Adnotandum est *verbum* non significare opus seu rem absolutè, sed rem, quæ dicta, aut voce significata est. Hoc posteriori modo accipitur in hoc loco *verbum*. Hinc facile est intelligere hujus sententiæ sensum. Non est impossibile apud Deum omne Verbum—id est, nihil eorum — quæ

Deus dicit, quovis modo id dicat, sive promittendo, sive comminando, sive annuntiando, impossibile Illi est; omnia enim quæcunque dicit facere potest."—*Toletus*.

² "Ne quis existimaret per ipsum Angelum fuisse factam incarnationem."—*Athanasius*.

Salmeron.
Gorranus.

would receive of His grace who was conceived at this time in the womb of the blessed Virgin. Not as I will, but as Thou wilt. *Be it unto me according to thy word.*¹

When the temptation came to Eve, and she was told that by eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree she should be exalted, and that she and her husband should be *as gods*, she put forth her hand and presumptuously took of the fruit of which God had commanded her not to eat. There is no trace of this presumption and disobedience in the virgin mother of Christ. When Gabriel came to Mary, and announced to her that what every Jewish mother had hoped for was to be her lot, and that she should be the mother of Incarnate God, instead of being puffed up by pride, and taking to herself this honour, the only answer which she makes is—not, Behold the mother of the Lord, but *Behold the handmaid of the Lord*. Her humility is shown in these words, whilst her submission and obedience are equally evidenced in the words which follow—*be it unto me according to thy word*.

Konigsteyn.

¹ “Nec Deus nobis Filium communicabit, nec Filius nostra in anima regenerabitur, nec Spiritus Sanctus nobis obumbrabit, nisi nos Deo con-

sentiamus et efficaciter velimus, quod velle debemus, dicamusque, *fiat.*” — *Hartung*.

••• “Veni, Domine Jesu, aufer scandala de regno Tuo, quod est anima mea, ut regnes Tu, qui debes, in ea. Venit enim avaritia et vendicat in me sibi sedem; jactantia cupit dominari mihi; superbia vult mihi esse rex, luxuria dicit, ego regnabo: ambitio, detractio, invidia et iracundia certant in meipso de meipso, cujus ego potissimum esse videar. Ego autem quantum valeo resisto; renitor quantum

juvor. Dominum meum Jesum reclamo; ipse me defendo; quia ipsius me juris agnosco. Ipsum mihi Deum, ipsum mihi Dominum teneo et dico. Non habeo Regem nisi Dominum Jesum. Veni ergo, Domine, disperge illos in virtute Tua et regnabis in me, quia Tu es Ipse Rex meus, et Deus meus, qui mandas salutes Jacob.” — *Bernard, Homilia iv. super Missus est, § 2.*

ST. MARK'S DAY.

ST. JOHN XV. 1—11.

(1) *I am the true Vine,*¹

OUR Blessed Lord had now risen from supper. He was in the act of departing to consummate the sacrifice of Himself, but pauses for a while to comfort His disciples with this parable, in which He sets forth the source of the Christian's life and the certainty of the Christian's reward, if he continue in *the true Vine*. Primarily, indeed, these words apply to the condition of the Apostles, to whom they were addressed; but secondarily, and through the Apostles, they were spoken for the whole of the members of Christ's Church. When He was about to be taken from His immediate followers, He could indeed speak to them no word more full of comfort than this, that so long as they continued stedfast in Him, and were united to Him by a living faith and an active love, no one could separate them from Him, *the true Vine*,² and that, though they should be cast forth by evil men, and be cut off from that vine, which had become a degenerate plant—the Jewish Church and synagogue—they should still remain grafted into Him, and

Toletus.

Theopl. ylaet.

Jer. II. 21.

¹ "Cum superiori sermone, quem sedendo habuit, videretur Dominus finem loquendi fecisse, et ad abeundum suos excitasse, quasi amplius non illic locuturus ad eos: tamen more amicorum, qui eum abitum parant, etiam postquam valedixerunt, nonnunquam novam colloctionis occasionem aliunde desumunt, sermonem suum cum amicis protrahentes, quod ab eis præ nimio amore ægre divellantur: etiam Dominus nunc novum ad suos jam ad eundem paratos exorditur stando sermonem. Et quidem superiori sermone hoc unice agebat ut de recessu suos moestos con-

solaretur Apostolos: isto vero primum quidem monet ut in se perseveranter maneant fide et dilectione: deinde vero et de tribulationibus quæ ipsis super venturæ erant præmonet: ac postremum per promissionem mittendi ad eos paracleti lenit tristitiam eorum de suo abitu, et metum obventurarum tribulationum."—*Jans. Gandavensis*.

² "The Lord is figuratively described as the vine, from which with pains and the art of husbandry, according to the word, the fruit is to be gathered."—*Clem. Alex. in Stromata, Book I. ch. ix.*

Lamy.
Menochius.

Ferus.

Ps. l. 3.

Jer. xvii. 8.

Matt. vii. 17
—20.Ps. lxxx. 8,
11.

Isa. v. 2.

Hosea x. 1.

Jer. li. 21.
Deut. xxxii.
32.

Lightfoot.

derive life and strength from Him, *the true Vine*, from whom nothing should ever remove them, save their own unbelief and sinfulness of heart.

Man is repeatedly spoken of in Holy Scripture under the figure of a tree. The servant of God is represented under the image of a *tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season. As a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh.* And our Blessed Lord speaks of the whole race of man as either good trees, bringing forth good fruit, or as evil trees, producing only evil fruit. But this image of the Vine is more especially applied to the Church of God either before or since the Incarnation of Christ. Israel is spoken of as the *Vine out of Egypt*, from which God had *cast out the heathen, and planted it* in their place, where it *stretched out its branches unto the sea, and its boughs unto the river; as the choicest Vine*, for which God Himself had fenced in a vineyard; and is mourned over as a *noble Vine*, which, by its sins, had been *turned into the degenerate plant of a strange Vine unto the Husbandman, as an empty Vine which bringeth forth fruit unto himself*, and had thus become like the *Vine of Sodom*, with *grapes of gall*, and clusters of bitter fruit.¹ Hitherto, indeed, Israel had been that vine into which every one who would worship God aright, and serve Him, was to be grafted. From henceforth, however, our Blessed Lord here tells His Apostles men are not to be inserted into that degenerate vine, but are to be planted in the vineyard of Christ, and grafted into Him.

Our Blessed Lord was, then, the Vine into which the regenerate children of God are to be grafted, the reality of the idea which is symbolically exhibited in the natural vine.

¹ "It may be that Jesus was led to begin with this comparison by a special occasion; perhaps a twig stretched through the window into the room where He was, or the apartment was decorated with the foliage of the vine. Rosenmüller (in the new *Exeg. Repert.* i. 172) has offered a peculiar interpretation of the choice of this metaphor. According to Josephus (*Antiq.* xv. 11, *Bell. Jud.* v. 5), in the door, seventy cubits high, which led into the Holy Place of the Temple, an artificial vine was spread out, the branches and leaves of which were made of precious metal, and its clusters of diamonds and pearls.

[See Mishna, Cod. Middoth, c. iii. 8.] Doubtless this vine was, according to prophetic passages, intended as a type of Israel, often called the vine of the Lord. Now, Rosenmüller thinks it was from the sight of this that Jesus was led to institute the comparison before us." — *Olshausen*. The comparison might well have arisen either from the *sight* or from the popularity of this symbolical ornament. It is not necessary to discuss whether Christ was standing before the portals of the Temple and pointing to the vine. The disciples would have understood the reference if it was made.

The vine seems to have been selected as the type of Him who is *the true Vine*¹—

(1) Because of the abundance of its fruit; for which reason it is used by David to express great fertility—*thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thine house.*² Hence this tree is especially appropriate as a type of Christ, through whose life and passion the abundant fruits of holiness are brought forth by believers. Ps. cxxviii. 3.
Dion. Carth.

(2) Because of the pleasantness and the grateful character of its fruit to man, as the fruits produced by the indwelling of Christ are those which are accordant with and pleasing to man's highest nature.

(3) Because of the strength and joy which wine produces within the heart of man. Judges ix. 13.
Ps. civ. 15.
Prov. xxxi.
6, 7.

(4) Because of the wide extent of the branches of the vine, stretching on all sides, and furnishing a striking figure of the growth and expansion of the Church, which is the body of Christ. Ps. lxxx. 11.

(5) Because wine, the fruit of the vine, is a type of the blood of Christ, and is sanctified and made His blood to us in the Holy Eucharist. Toletus.

But our Blessed Lord is not only a vine, He is emphatically *the true Vine*. The vine in nature is a figure and symbol pointing us to, and a parable prophesying of, Christ. Israel of old was spoken of by the prophets as God's Vine, but was only an imperfect type of *the true Vine*; for the full reality of all these figures in nature, as in Holy Scripture, is only to be found in Christ, the Second Adam, the root and stem from which all the people of God derive their life and produce their fruit.³ He is the archetypal Vine, for the material creatures of God are but imperfect examples of that perfect spiritual life and organism in which the creature is raised up to be a partaker of the Divine nature. All corporeal things are shadows and images of spiritual realities, Quesnel.

Stier.
Barrallius.
Alford.
Jain Gand.

¹ "*Ego sum vitis vera. Hæc est vitis de qua Geneseos, cap. xlix. 10, 11: Et Ipse erit expectatio gentium, ligans, ad vineam pullum suum, et ad vitem, ô fili mi, asinam suam. Lavabit in vino stolam suam, et in sanguine uvæ pallium suum. Vineam et vitis humanitas Christi est. Ligavit ad vineam et ad vitem pullum suum, et asinam suam: quando populum gentium et populum Hebræorum Sibi incorporavit, fide colligavit atque univit. Lavit in vino stolam suam, et in sanguine uvæ pallium suum, quando in cruce calcavit torcular solus, et sanguine proprio hu-*

manitatem, quam pro omnibus assumpsit, etsi in se mundissimam, lavando, lavit omnes qui sua futuri essent membra suæque humanitati alliganda."—*Faber Stapulensis.*

² *Tent Work in Palestine*, ii. 261.

³ "Christ is, as the Syriac renders it here, *the Vine of Truth*: just as Israel is called *a noble vine, wholly a right seed, a seed of truth* (Jer. ii. 21), right genuine seed; or, as the Septuagint renders it, *a vine, bringing forth fruit, πᾶσαν ἀληθινήν, wholly true*; to which the allusion may be here."—*Gill.*

John i. 9;
i. 4.

John vi. 35.

Corn. & Lap.

Jans. Gand.

Menochius.

Lienard.

Hilary.

Bonaventura.

and thus all other vines are but shadows and types of Christ, *the true Vine*, who diffuses joy and refreshment, and has more abundant branches and fruit than any vine of earth.¹ In this way also is He called *the true Light*, the *true Life*, and the *true Bread* to man; not merely because these things resemble Him, but because He enlightens, vivifies, and nourishes man more than any other *light*, *life*, or *bread* can do.² He is *the true Vine* as opposed to all false and unfruitful vines; *the true Vine* in that He nourishes those who are grafted into Him more surely than the vine in the field affords nourishment to its branches.³ In this, then, consists the resemblance between Christ and the vine which He has created—that, like as the vine communicates vital sap to its branches, so that they are able to bear abundant fruit, in the same way Christ communicates vital sap—sanctifying grace—to all His faithful members, so that they also are able to bring forth abundantly the fruit of good works: and that, just as the branches of the material vine are unable to bear fruit, but wither and die when separated from the parent stock, so also those who are not united to Christ by a living faith and true charity, are unable to bring forth good fruit, but wither and die because they receive no grace from Him.

Christ is this *true Vine*, as to His human nature, by virtue of that incarnation through which man has been engrafted into Him; for in this way only can we be joined to Him so as to be one with Him, as the branches are one with the vine. The spirit, however, which He gives to us—the sap of a true spiritual life—we have from the Divine nature which is united hypostatically to the human nature of Christ Jesus. As man, then, we are engrafted into Him, and derive from Him our spiritual nourishment; but the grace which He gives us flows not from the human, but from the Divine nature. In calling Himself by this name—*the true Vine*—and by calling us *the branches*, which are of one nature

¹ “Jésus est la vraie vigne plantée de la main de Dieu. Elle ne porte pas un fruit amer comme la synagogue, mais un vin dont le monde est racheté, lané, sanctifié, nourri, fortifié sur la terre et enivré dans le ciel.”—*Quesnel*.

² “*Vitis* vocatur, quia vinum fecit. Omnia enim hæc Evangeliorum verba vinum sunt et non qualecumque, sed optimum vinum, non de alia, nisi de hac, vite vindemiatum et expressum. Inde est enim quod in suæ prædicationis initio aquas Dominus convertit in vinum, quatenus nova vitis novum

vinum funderet, quo illas nuptias et Architriclinum inebriaret.”—*Bruno*.

³ “The Cabalistic doctors say that the Shekinah is called *וַיְהִי*, a vine; see Gen. xlix. 11, where the Jews observe the King Messiah is so called (*Zohar* in Gen. fol. 127, 3).”—*Gill*. “A rabbinical saying has been preserved which shows how entirely the Jews recognised the vine as the symbol of the Saviour: ‘Whosoever dreameth of a vine branch shall see the Messiah’ (*Berachoth*, fol. 89).”—*Plumptre*.

necessarily with the parent stock, our Blessed Lord assures us that He has really taken upon Him our nature. For for this intent was He made man, that so we might be grafted into One who had become of the same nature as ourselves.

Augustine.

There is deep significancy in selecting the vine as the type and semblance of Christ, and as that tree of which the Almighty Father is the Husbandman: the constant care which the vine demands, the daily tending which it requires, is a figure of the watchful, untiring care with which God the Father watches over us, the branches of His planting.¹

Jane. Gand.

And my Father is the Husbandman.

Eccius. xxiv.

17

Matt. xxi. 33.

1 Cor. iii. 9.

The cultivator of the vineyard—He who has sent Me to do His will on earth, and who watches over the various branches which are grafted into Me, and who also cuts off and delivers to burning those branches which have died and are useless. It is God who prunes away the too luxuriant and fruitless branches from the mystical Vine; it is the Father who watches over those who have been grafted into the Incarnate One. It is therefore God the Son, one with the Father, who is the Husbandman of the vineyard, and who watches over every branch in *the true Vine*. As Man, Christ is the Vine itself, into which all the faithful are engrafted, and from whom they receive all their life; as God, He is Himself the Husbandman. For what the Father does, that also does the Son. Christ, however, speaks not of Himself as the Husbandman, lest it should seem that it was the man of whom He was speaking, whereas it is God who is the Husbandman: the whole three Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity, each performing His office, and yet all concurring in every act of mercy and of judgment towards man. Christ, then, is the Vine into which man is engrafted; not, indeed, the Eternal Son, but the Eternal Son as incarnate in the one Person of Christ Jesus—God and Man. The Father purges and tends the branches of this Vine; the Son cleanses, through the word, the same branches; and the Holy Spirit is the living sap, of which we partake through our union with Christ.

Corn. & Lap.

Menochius.

Augustine.

Ferus.

God is specially spoken of as *the Husbandman*²—

¹ “Nulla arbor tantâ indiget culturâ atque vitis.”—*Jansen. Yprensis.*

² “Γεωργός is used in classical writers specially for ἀμπελουργός, and husbandman for vine-dresser. Hence we have even γεωργεῖν with such a limitation in Plato, with τὴν ἀμπελον in Achill. Tat. and often in the writers on husbandry with οἶνον. Further, γεωργός,

as distinguished from γεωπόνος, does not so much indicate the labouring servant as the owner of the land, the lord who manages his own property.”—*Stier.*

“And Noah began to be an husbandman [הָאָדָם הָרִשִׁי, —γεωργός in *Septuag.*], and he planted a vineyard.”—*Gen. ix. 20.*

(1) Because He it was who planted the Vine. The act of sending His Son Christ Jesus into the world, into whom we are grafted, is the act of the Almighty Father, the result of His love to man, who willed to give us the Only Begotten for our salvation.

John III. 16.

(2) He is so called because He tends and prunes the luxuriance of that Vine, which is His Church, digging about it as a husbandman digs about the earthly vine, that it may bring forth much fruit.

Luke xiii. 8.

(3) The name of *husbandman*, moreover, points out the vigilant care which is bestowed upon us by God, the unceasing watchfulness of our heavenly Father, which is imaged by the daily and hourly labour and attention required of the vinedresser.

Ferus.

Matt. xv. 12.
Gal. v. 22.
Ephes. v. 9.

(2) *Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit. He taketh away;¹ and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

Corn. & Lap.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Chrysostom.

Euthymius.

Stier.

Our Blessed Lord here says nothing of any care bestowed by *the Husbandman* upon the vine, but only upon the branches; for the vine is sufficient of itself, and needs no care. It is not the vine which is to be pruned or *purged*—for this requires it not—but the branches only. In nature the root of the tree requires care and the attention of the husbandman equally at least with the branches, but the difference between the natural tree and the stock into which we are grafted—the true and spiritual Vine—is here pointed out, in that only the branches are spoken of as needing and receiving the care of *the Husbandman*.

And all the branches of this living Vine are spoken of as under the eye and the care of the Father. *Every branch* is observed. None are neglected by Him, none are spared; those that are not pruned away as useless are *purged*² in order that they may be the more fruitful.

As there are some shoots or suckers in the natural vine which bear no fruit and do nothing but waste the sap which

¹ “Αἶρει, tollit. Tempus præsens pro futuro seu indefinito: tollere consuevit, abscindere, resecare, separare à vite.”—*Luca Brugensis*.

² “Were it not for ὑμεῖς καθαροί *iste* at ver. 3, that must be rendered ‘ye are clean,’ καθαίρει αὐτό would be rendered ‘He pruneth it.’ We may here note with S. Cyril of Jerusalem [*Catech.* xiv. p. 145], that these words were spoken by our Lord when

around the city καιρὸς τῆς τομῆς ἐφθασεν.—ἀρα οὐχὶ νῦν ἡ γῆ ἀνθῶν πλήρης; καὶ τέμνουσι τοὺς ἀμπέλους.—Ξανθεκοῦ τούτου τοῦ μηνὸς ἐνεστῶτος;—ὁ μὲν—τοῦ πάσχα—τότε τοίνυν γέγονεν ἡ σωτηρία—ὅτε τὰ ἄνθη ὥφθη, καὶ ἡ τομὴ ἐφθασε· κῆπος ἦν ὁ τόπος τῆς ταφῆς, καὶ ἄμπελος ἡ φυθεῖσα καὶ ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος εἶρηκε.”—*Malan's Notes on the Gospel of St. John*.

the good and fruitful branches should have, so there are branches in Christ, *the true*, the spiritual *Vine*, which though really deriving all life from Him, and capable of bearing fruit, are yet fruitless—members of His body and His Church, though useless, evil, and unworthy members. They are spoken of as in Christ—in *Me*; they are in the Vine still, they have a certain belief in Him, and maintain some profession of Christianity, but yet they bear no fruit of holiness, though grafted into Him from whom they might have power to bring forth fruit. These He threatens shall be taken away, as of old the prophet had declared that because the Jews bore no fruit, *there shall be no grapes on the vine, . . . and the leaf shall fade, and the things which I have given them shall pass away from them.*¹ Primarily, like the whole of this parable of the vine and its branches, these words had a special reference to our Blessed Lord's own Apostles. Amongst them was the unfruitful Judas, who was about to be taken away and separated from the Vine.² In the same body were also weak, faithless branches, timid, purblind disciples, who needed all the care of the Great Husbandman, and who were to be *purged* in order that they, too, might *bring forth more fruit*. All who are incorporated into the Church by baptism are branches of the one true Vine, members of Christ, whether they be in their lives fruitful or unfruitful.

Tholuck.

Estius.

Toletus.

Hengstenberg.
Jer. viii. 12.

Corn. & Lap.

Stier.

God purges the members of His Church, the branches of the Vine, in various ways:—

(1) By the word spoken: hence our Blessed Lord says, *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*

(2) He does so by tribulation and affliction, by the trial of persecution or of poverty, by evil report and sorrow of various kinds, cleansing as by a flail, and driving away from the soul all that defiles it as the chaff is driven away from the wheat; or separating the evil that is in our nature from the good, as the oil and the wine are separated from the husks of the olive and the grape by the press; or, again, purging away the dross from the heart of His saints by the fire of affliction, *as silver is tried* and purified by the material fire.

Ps. lxxvi. 10.
Gorranus.

¹ "Si sterilitas condemnatur, quid erit iniquitas?"—*Dion. Carthusianus*.

² "The different acts of the vine-dresser, *taking away* some branches, and *purging* others, are expressed by the Mishnic doctors by פסולת and זריחה (Mishna Sheviith, cap. 2, § 3). The former, the commentators say, signifies

to cut off the branches that are withered and perished, and are good for nothing; and the latter signifies the pruning of the vine when it has a superfluity of branches, or these extend themselves too far; when some are left and others taken away (Maimonides and Bartenora in *ibid.*)."—*Gill*.

(3) By terror of conscience, by the cries of warning and reproach heard within us; by the memory of past judgments and the dread of a future account.

Corn. & Lap.

What Christ seeks in His Church, then, is not luxuriant profession, not words, but fruits of holiness. He seeks not for many branches, but He would find them fruit-bearing;¹ and by this word *fruit* is meant not outward works merely, but inward graces, the clustering fruits of the Spirit—*love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*. And when these are found, still the hand of the Great Husbandman is not withdrawn; man is not left to himself; *every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit*. He purgeth it, for cleanness and fruitfulness naturally assist each other.

Ferus.

Gal. v. 22, 23.

Bengel.

Cajetan.

Ferus.

Let us, then, remember the lessons here taught us. Not those only who do evil, who actively defy God, who corrupt others by their evil example, are cut away from *the true Vine*; but those who are merely useless, who bear no fruit, who are barren of all works of holiness, are also rejected by the Great Husbandman. Again, when God lays His hand upon us, when He afflicts us, let us remember that He does this not in anger, but in love—not in order to destroy us, but only that we may *bear more fruit*.

John xiii. 10;
xvii. 17.
Ephes. v. 26.
1 Pet. i. 22.

(3) *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*

Lev. xix. 23.

In these words there seems a reference to a peculiar provision of the Jewish law with reference to fruit-bearing trees: for three years after the planting of the tree the fruit of it was to be accounted unclean—it *shall not be eaten of*; in the fourth year the fruit was to be offered to God, and not until the fifth year might men eat of it. Christ here passes from the general assertion to a particular application to those for whom His words were spoken, and hence one commentator has imagined a further meaning in these words, and supposes our Blessed Lord to refer to that cleansing which had come to His Apostles at the end of the three years during which they had been with Him. In this view

¹ "Domus, inquit Augustinus, Dei credendo fundatur, sperando erigitur, diligendo perficitur, &c. Fides sapientia est divina à Deo accepta, non solum contemplatrix sit, sed etiam operatrix maximè sit practica, praxim amet, in praxi versetur, et operatione.

Mitte sapientiam de cœlis sanctis Tuis, et à sede magnitudinis Tuæ, ut sapiens, ut sciam quid acceptum sit apud Te, ut mecum sit et mecum laboret [Sap. ix. 10]. Sapientiam postulat, non solum ut in intellectu sit, sed etiam ut laboret atque operetur." —Barradius.

the words would mean, *Now ye are clean through the word*, which word I have been preaching to you for three years.¹ Lightfoot.

They were clean, not so much because they were separated from the company of the traitor, as from pharisaical observances, from the vain and superstitious rites of Judaism.² Jans. Gand.
Our Blessed Lord had washed their feet, and had declared them to be clean. By that passion and sacrifice which He was about to offer on the cross, Peter was to be cleansed from self-confidence, and from that ignorance which prevented him from knowing where Christ was going; Thomas was now to be shown the way in which his Master was to walk; and Philip, who had sought to see the Father, and knew not that in seeing Christ he had indeed seen the Father, was now to have the veil removed from his eyes; and all the Apostles were to be cleansed from carnal fear and unbelief. They were to be cleansed not by the forgiveness of sin merely, but by the gift of Divine grace imparted to them, which should remove their sins in order that they might bear much fruit. Corn. & Lap. Guillaud.

They were made clean by *the word* which their Lord and Master had spoken unto them³—His word and doctrine spoken in their hearing during the whole period of His ministry; the Gospel which He had declared to them and to the whole world, by believing and obeying which they and all mankind were to be saved. *The word*, then, which had cleansed the Apostles means the evangelical doctrine, the whole teaching of our Blessed Lord. Not the transient sound, indeed, but the abiding virtue, the word of faith, by which men believe unto righteousness and salvation. But though the declaration of Christ extends to the whole of His teaching during the three years that they had been Theophylact. Faber Stap. Titelmann. Jans. Gand. Maldonatus. Bonaventura. Rom. x. 10.

¹ "Sermo Dei est aqua; unde Si quis sitit, veniat ad Me et bibat [Joh. vii. 37]. Sed quare non sunt mundi illi, qui tot audiunt sermones, maxime theologi? Apostoli enim non nisi per tres annos ad plus audierunt. Sed ipsi sicut panni, in quibus ponuntur cineres, qui sordidantur, unde alii lavantur. Item nota quod, quantumcunque sit bona lixivia, nunquam propter hoc lavantur panni, nisi ponantur in ea et moveantur et fricentur. Similiter quia cor—id est, affectionem—non ponunt in verbis Domini, nec confriquant ibi, ideo non lavantur."—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

² "Dicit mundi estis ab erroribus Judaicis."—*Th. Aquinas.*

³ "S. Chrys. in loco: 'Εν ῥήματι. ἐν ποίῳ; ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἀγίου Πνεύματος. So Theodoret, Theophylact, Œcumen, and, of the earlier Latin fathers, S. Ambrose, S. Aug. de Nupt. i. 38. Sic hoc accipiendum est, ut eodem lavacro regenerationis et verbo sanctificationis omnia prorsus mala hominum regeneratorum mudentur, &c. [Eph. v. 25—27]. Certa illa Evangelica verba, sine quibus non potest Baptismus consecrari [De Bapt. c. Donat. vi. 47]. Verbis Evangelicis in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti consecrata est aqua [Cont. Crescen. iv. 15]."—*Note in Oxford transl. of Augustine on John.*

Toletus.

Rupertus.

Heb. iv. 12.

Cyril.

Hugo de S.
Charo.Col. i. 23.
John ii. 6.

Toletus.

Cajetan.

Maldonatus.

Guilliaud.

Hosea ii. 20.

with Him, yet there seems a more especial reference to the cleansing nature of that *word* which He had just declared to them—the Eucharistic doctrine which He had revealed to them after the Paschal Supper, the verity of His Passion and Resurrection—those mighty truths of redeeming love which, when received into the heart, cleanse the whole nature; *for the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow*—quick and powerful through Christ, whose word it is, and from whom that *Word* derives its power to cleanse.

In thus declaring that they were cleansed or purged *through the word which* He had spoken to them, our Blessed Lord declares that He also is the Husbandman who purges and cleanses the branches grafted into Him, and that He and the Father are indeed one.¹

(4) *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.*

With these words our Blessed Lord concludes this parable of the vine and the branches: what follows is the explanation of the parable.

It is not said, Try to abide in Me and then I will abide in you, but, So strive to abide in Me that I may abide in you.² The abiding of Christ in the heart of the believer does not follow upon the believer abiding in Him, but is cotemporaneous with it. Remain in Me, for in so doing I shall remain in you, and you will, as a consequence, be able to bring forth fruit. He bids us abide in Him by a living faith, and He abides in us by His word and by the grace of the Spirit: *I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.* Elsewhere we read, *He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth or abideth*

¹ “Colligimus ex superioribus quod constanter confitendum est. Tota Trinitas agricola est, Pater, Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus. Purgat Pater, purgat Filius, purgat Spiritus Sanctus. Purgat verbum, purgat fides viva, purgat sacramentum. Pater per Filium et in Filio purgat Suo Spiritu. Purgat similiter et Filius et Spiritus Sanctus, quorum trium una est operatio et vis purgandi. Est igitur Pater agricola, Filius agricola, et Spiritus Sanctus agricola et author purgationis. Christus

purgat ut manus et potentia, estque Christi humanitas omnium beneficiorum Dei in nos tanquam canalis et instrumentum, per quod ad nos Dei bona et Spiritus Sancti dona fluunt. Sacramentum purgat ut instrumentum: similiter et fides ac verbum prædicatum.”—Guilliaudus.

² “Ego in vobis. Supple curate ut maneam.”—Mariana, *Scholia in Vet. et Nov. Testamenta*. “Facite ut maneatis in Me et ut Ego maneam in vobis.”—Bengel.

in Me, and I in him. The more we really receive His flesh and blood, the more we tame, and discipline, and render divine our own flesh and blood: the more Christ is present within us, the surer He abides with us. John vi. 56.
Hengstenberg.

By bidding us *abide* or persevere in that grace which He has given us, our Blessed Lord clearly declares the freedom of man's will: his power to remove himself from the True Vine and to reject Christ.¹ Rupertus.
Guillaud.

In these words we have a reference to, or rather a proof of, the union of two distinct natures in the Person of Christ. Were He not really man, He would not be the Vine into which all we are engrafted, and of which we are made branches. Were He not really God, He could not give grace to all those who have been made His members, nor enable them to bring forth the fruits of holiness.² Wordsworth.

(5) *I am the Vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.* Hosea xiv. 8.
Acts iv. 12.
Phil. i. 11;
iv. 13.

Our Blessed Lord had before declared Himself to be the Vine; now He adds that we are the branches of which He had spoken, and declares that *he*, and he only, who abideth in Him can bring forth fruit—that is, he cannot bring forth good fruit; that which is derived from the vine—that which shall avail to eternal life. All desires after holiness, all works of penitence—the first motions of the soul of man towards God—are the works of Him who, in taking the whole nature of man into union with the Divine nature, took to Himself the nature of all mankind. As He was ever the Light of all men, *without* Him we can have no good desires; for the good within any one of us is from Him. *Without* Him, *without* His merits, *without* His working, none can accomplish anything necessary for his salvation. Jans. Gand.
Corn. à Lap.
Estius.

Without Me (χωρὶς ἐμοῦ), that is—

(1) Apart from Me, separate from and broken away from Me, who am the True Vine. Stier.

(2) Not merely away—separate from Me, but also without My help, even those who have once been grafted into Me, and are abiding in Me, *can do nothing.*³ Alex. Nat.

¹ "*Manete in Me*, gratiam suscipiendo, et *Ego in vobis*, vos adjuvando."—*Th. Aquinas*. "*Ἐν ἐμοὶ μένειν* expresses the continuous act by which the Christian lays aside all that he might draw from his own wisdom, strength, or merit, to derive all from Christ."—*Godet*.

² "Fons divinæ vitæ et spiritualium

deliciarum torrens quoniam censendus est alius quàm Filius, qui impinguat et irrigat vivifica et hilari Spiritus gratia non secus ac palmites Ei adhaerentes per charitatem ac fidem nostras animas."—*Cyril*.

³ "*Χωρὶς ἐμοῦ*—*sine Me*; ut non solum vulgata versio Latina, non solum

And as these words had their primary reference to the disciples, and were spoken in order to comfort and instruct the Apostles of our Blessed Lord, so they pointed out this truth, that all power of working miracles, all help in their Divine mission, all power to reach the hearts of those to whom they preached, could come only from the active assistance of Christ, which they, as the true branches of that living and life-giving Vine, were to receive from Him.

Titelmann.

And yet more: these glowing words of love, as they seem to express the very nature of Him who is love, so are they full of the deep, mysterious truths which concern His nature. Here, in saying that the Apostles, that men, *are the branches* of Him who is the true Vine, He declares the identity of His nature with the nature of man. For, like as the vine and the branches must needs be one in nature, so is the Incarnate God to whom we are united one in nature with those who are joined to Him, for the *twain* are *one flesh*.

Cyril.
Matt. xix. 5.Matt. iii. 10:
vii. 19.

(6) *If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*

Lange.

Godet.

At the time when these words were spoken the operation of pruning had just taken place in Palestine. It may, then, well be that Jesus at this moment might have had before His eye the fire in which the branches recently lopped off were burning. In this way does He ever make the simple acts of every-day life parables of spiritual truths.

If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth, and like as vine branches when cut off are cast forth, collected by men, and burned, so shall it be with that man who is cut off from Christ. He shall wither and die, and then be gathered into a bundle for burning. The engrafted branch, then, derives no security from the fact of its having once been engrafted, its having once been a living branch actuated by the love

loci paralleli, sed Latini Patres et Concilia Occidentis, quibus ea versio hujus loci probata est, plane evincunt; imprimis vero Concilium universale Africæ Carthagine celebratum anno 418 contra Pelagii hæresim, canone vi. cujus hæc sunt verba: 'Item placuit, ut quicumque dixerit ideo nobis gratiam justificationis dari, ut quod facere per liberum jubemur arbitrium, facilius possimus implere per gratiam, tanquam etsi gratia non daretur, non quidem

facile sed tamen possimus etiam sine illa implere divina mandata, anathema sit. De fructibus enim mandatorum Dominus loquebatur, ubi non ait, Sine Me difficilius potestis facere, sed ait, *Sine Me nihil potestis facere*. Orientales etiam versiones, Syriaca, Persica, Arabica, Æthiopica, vim Græci textus eodem exprimunt modo secundum linguarum illarum proprietatem ac vulgata nostra, *Sine Me non potestis quidquam facere*."—*Alex. Natalis*.

and made fruitful by the grace derived from Christ. If the Christian perseveres not in holiness, he will be cut off from the body of Christ, his faith will wither and wholly die, and like a dry worthless branch he may be cast into that fire which *never shall be quenched*. Hence the warning of the Apostle, which seems an echo of our Lord's words: *Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue (ἐὰν ἐπιμείνης) in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.* Estius.
Rom. xi. 22.

Let us note the five stages in the fall and rejection of a child of grace:—

(1) He is *cast forth* from Christ now, as he will hereafter be rejected and not allowed to enter heaven and the company of just men and angels. Corn. & Lap.

(2) He withers, loses all the strength and life of faith which was in him, by the withdrawal of Divine grace, consequent upon his separation from Christ. Cajetan.
Gorranus.

(3) He will be gathered at that day when the angels gather together the good and the bad, and will be placed apart with the worthless and the unrepentant sinners. Matt. xiii. 30,
41.
Jansen Yp.

(4) He will be cast into the fire.

(5) He will there be burned.¹

Tirinus.

When the branch is cut off from the trunk of the tree, there remains, for a brief space, somewhat of vitality, which, however, is soon lost, and then it withers away. So likewise the Christian, even when he is separated from Christ, preserves some outward semblance of spiritual life, and some outward trace of his old purity; but this soon decays, and at length dies. Not, however, until this, until grace has wholly died out of him, is the judgment. Stier.

(7) *If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* John xiv. 13,
14; xvi. 23.
1 John iii. 22.

That is, *If ye abide in Me* by living faith, then shall *My words abide in you* because of the love which ye have for

¹ “‘Inflamabuntur, non tamen comburentur,’ exponit Euthymius. Uno enim verbo *ardet* duo significantur: unum, vehementia ignis agentis in perfidos; non enim lentè et paullatim in eos agit, ut ignis noster in ligna viridia, sed mox sine mora vehementissimè tamquam arida sarmenta inflamat et cruciat. Alterum, æternitas hujus ignis,

ardentis et cruciantis in sæcula sæculorum, juxta illud, *Ignis eorum non extinguetur*, Isa. lxvi. ver. 24. *Ardet* igitur—id est, mox continuè et perpetuò ardebit. Ergo, ut quis evitet gehennam ignis, necesse est caveat, ne aut fidem aut charitatem erga Christum derelinquat.”—*Luca Brugensis*.

John xiv. 21. Me, and then *ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* As in the previous chapter Christ had said, *He that hath My commandments, and not only hath them, but also keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father.* The word of God is only said to be kept by or to abide in a man when it is fulfilled by that man. Toletus. When the words of God abide in man's memory by meditation, and in his will, so that he does the things which God commands, then to such, and to such only, our Blessed Lord adds the promise, *Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*¹ Corn. & Lep.

Whatever we ask, when actuated by the spirit which we possess through our union with Christ, and by His words abiding in us, shall be given unto us. For if we are really abiding in Christ, how can we wish anything but what is befitting to the members of Christ? How can we wish anything when abiding in our Saviour which is alien to our salvation and to our union with Him? What we wish when united to Christ are the things of Christ, and not those of the world, and such blessings Christ will assuredly give us. For he who abides constantly in Christ will only ask that which is consonant with the will of Christ to give. Cajetan. Augustine. Luca Brug.

These words, *what ye will*, are a declaration of God's omnipotence. Nothing, either spiritual or temporal, is beyond His power or His will to bestow on us, if only we ask it as members of Christ. Guillaud.

The blessedness and high privilege, then, of those who abide in Christ are shown—

(1) In that they are purged by the Father, in order that they may be able to bring forth more fruit to the glory of God. ver. 2.

(2) In that they are cleansed by the Son, the Eternal Word, and by the word which He has revealed. ver. 3.

(3) In that they are comforted by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit—*Abide in Me, and I will abide in you*, by the Spirit which I will send to you. ver. 4.

(4) In that Christ hath promised that whatsoever they shall ask in His Name He and the Father will give it them.² Boys. John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 16.

¹ "Τὰ ῥήματα μου ἐν ὑμῖν μένουν. Tunc dicenda sunt verba Ejus in nobis manere, quando facimus quæ præcepit et diligimus quæ promisit."—Augustine.

² "Tunc manent Christi verba in nobis, si sint in intellectu per fidem et meditationem; in voluntate per

bonum affectum et charitatem, ut de eo dici possit, *Sed in lege Domini voluntas ejus; et in lege Ejus meditabitur die ac nocte* [Ps. i. 2]; in manibus nostris per executionem; in ore verò per aliorum eruditionem et ædificationem."—Salmeron.

(8) *Herein is My Father glorified, that¹ ye bear much fruit ; so shall ye be My disciples.*

Matt. v. 16.
John viii. 31;
xiii. 35.
Phil. i. 11.

The glory of the Father is manifested to the world by the fruits of the Spirit, evidenced in the lives of the disciples of Christ. For this end they are bidden to *let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven.* The bunch of grapes brought by the spies *between two, upon a staff*, was a testimony of the fertility of the land of Canaan, the promised possession of the children of Israel, and the type of heaven ; so is the largeness of the fruit which we bear a testimony of the richness and the glory of that land which is promised to all God's faithful people, and a proof of the reality and of the abundance of the grace which God has given us.

Tirinus.

Matt. v. 16.
Numb. xiii.
23.

God, then, is glorified—

(1) By the success of the mission of His ministers, to whom this promise first was made.

Titelmann.

(2) By our individual advancement in a holy life, by our proving ourselves to be indeed His disciples—that is, disciples worthy of Him whose name we bear.

Alford.
Bengel.

God is glorified more by the sanctification of Christians than even by the creation of the world ; more by the fruit which is brought forth by the faithful, and by the operation of the Holy Spirit manifested in their lives, than by all the flowers and the fruits of earth. For this reason—His own glory—He formed that spiritual world which is the kingdom of Christ, the body of which our Blessed Lord is the Head. He, then, that would glorify God, let him strive to purify himself in heart and mind, and endeavour to bring forth abundantly the fruits of holiness. This is what our Father seeks from us ; this it is to which we are called by the words and the example of Christ.²

Alex. Nat.

(9) *As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you : continue (μεῖναιτε) ye in My love.*

As implies not an equality, but a similitude of love. And

Corn. à Lap.

¹ "Iva. Non declarat hoc loco finem, sed illud ipsum explanat, in quo posita est gloria Patris. Est ergo quasi dicat, Per hoc glorificabitur Pater Meus, si fructum multum afferatis."—*Luca Brugensis*,

vobis, à Me toties promisso in nomine Patris Mei: et hujus Spiritus Sancti virtute vos sitis imitatores Mei, et verè discipuli doctrinæ Meæ absque ulla exceptione, sed agentes et facientes ea quæ à Me aguntur et fiunt: hic erit fructus plurimus, qualem afferre non possunt qui in Me non manent, et Meæ naturæ non sunt participes ut membra capitis."—*Arias Montanus*.

² "In hoc manifestè cognoscetur gloria Patris, si promissa Sua præstet per Filium, et Filium Me Suum esse confirmet misso Spiritu Sancto in
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Luca Brug.

the love which is here spoken of is not that eternal love which the Father had for the Eternal Son, but rather that love which the Father has for the Man Christ Jesus. With similar love to that which the Father bestows upon our Blessed Lord because of the nature which He has assumed to Himself, does the Incarnate Saviour love each one of His members. The words of Christ, then, seem to mean, With that same love wherewith the Father has loved Me, the Man Christ Jesus, and through it has bestowed such grace upon that human nature which I have, and which He has united to the Divine nature in My Person, so do I love you and graft you into Myself, and unite you to that human nature, to that Vine, which by My Incarnation is already united to the Godhead.

Jansen Yp.

Here, then, does our Incarnate Lord define the manner of His love for us: it was *as* the Father loved Him. Not, that is, *as* the Father hath loved the Eternal Son, but *as* God hath loved the Man Christ Jesus. God has so loved Him.

(1) As to give Him all those spiritual gifts and graces which are needful for His ministry on earth.

Cajetan.

(2) Through and because of His passion and death the Father has given to Him these prerogatives which He has merited, the right to judge mankind and to bear rule over all the world. So does our Blessed Lord give to His Apostles spiritual gifts for their mission, strength to endure with patience the trials which await them, and perseverance to attain unto the crown and glory which is laid up for them in the world to come. So also does He give grace to every soul, however lowly and humble his lot, to do the will of God here, to bring forth the fruit of holiness in this world, and to attain to eternal life.

John xiv. 15;
xvi. 28.

(10) *If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.*

Lampe.

As the *commandments* which our Blessed Lord here declares He has *kept* are those which were imposed upon Him because of His humanity, and through His submission to the law which all men were bound to fulfil, so the love in which He

¹ "Dilexit Pater Christum tanquam filium, ita ut Ei communicaverit omnia bona Sua; de morte ad vitam Eum erigendo, animamque Ejus ab inferis liberando. Eodem modo asserit Christum nos diligere, quod dignitatem filiorum Dei nobis communicaverit, et in persecutionibus conservavit, et de morte ad vitam revocarit."—*Salmeron*.

is here said to *abide* is that love for God which He had as Man, and which He manifested and maintained whilst on earth by His perfect obedience to the will of the Father. In this love He bids us abide, through obedience to the commandment of the same Father, copying the example and being strengthened by the obedience of Christ.¹ Salmeron.

Lest the Apostles should ask what they should do in order to keep the love of Christ when He had departed in bodily presence from them, He tells them that they have but to abide stedfast in those truths and that doctrine which He has taught them. By keeping the commandments of Christ we remain grafted in the Vine, we *abide* in that love which He has for us. Our Lord says not, If ye keep My commandments ye shall obtain My love, but *ye shall abide in it*; for before we can keep His commandments and do His will we must possess that love: and by the keeping of His commandments, through the power of His indwelling love, without which we should be unable to do any good thing, we retain possession of that love. Cajetan.

Love is the first gift which God gives us, for if we had not that we should be utterly powerless to keep the least of the commandments of God. Luca Brug.

(11) *These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain (μελνῇ) in you, and that your joy might be full.*² John xvi. 24;
xvii. 13.
1 John i. 4.

These things have I spoken unto you, that by your abiding in Me, and bringing forth the fruits of holiness, ye may give to Me that joy which I have because of those who so live; and that the joy which ye experience as My disciples, and which flows to you from a holy life, may abide for ever with you. Corn. & Lap.

When, then, our Blessed Lord says *My joy*, He does not mean the joy which they shall have concerning Him, for this is afterwards spoken of as their joy. Rather He means by His joy, that joy which He deigns to feel at our redemption and sanctification. Our joy, on the other hand, arises from R. thymus.

¹ "Declarat se servasse praecepta Patris Sui. Duplicita praecepta à Patre Salvator acceperat, qua Homo et qua Mediator. Qua Homo, subjectus est legi hominibus praecriptæ, Gal. iv. 3, 4. Qua Mediator, per consilium pacis obstrictus est ad λύτρον justitiæ divinæ persolvendum. Hoc κυρίως praeceptum Patris dici potest, et de eo

cap. x. 18, xii. 40, xiv. 31, mentio est facta. Hoc posterius prius involvit." —*Lampe*.

² "'Η χαρὰ πληροῦται is a phrase peculiar to John—1 John i. 4; 2 John 12; found also in his Gospel, xvi. 24, xvii. 13—and expresses the absolute character of this joyfulness." —*Tholuck*.

the consciousness of His nearness to us, the sense of His presence, the assurance of the truth of His promises—that joy which springs from the faith of the regenerate, which is indeed begun here, but which is only completed in the world to come.

Augustine.

Dion. Carth.

Ps. xvii. 15.

Salmeron.

That your joy may be full. That is, that that joy which we have on earth may be *fulfilled* in the world to come, when we shall wake up and shall be satisfied with His glory. For whilst earthly joys are insufficient to satisfy the soul of man, and shall utterly fail, spiritual joys—the joys of heaven—shall increase day by day, and be perfected in the eternal glory of the Father.

These, then, are the reasons which our Blessed Lord gives to His Apostles, and through them to us, why we should abide in Him:—

(1) That without Him none of us can do any good thing, can bear any good fruit.

(2) That if we do abide in Him we shall certainly bring forth abundant fruit.

(3) That those who do not abide in Him, but are cut off, are cast out, are rejected, wither, and are finally burned.

(4) That those who abide in Him shall ask and obtain whatever they need.

(5) That such living branches glorify God in their lives, and make Him known in the most effectual way to the whole world.

Corn. & Lap.

(6) That He loves them, and therefore it is right that they should love Him because of His love, and should continue to love Him in return for His love. But those who do so, through and by means of that act of love, remain in Him.

(7) That the joy of His true disciples—the living branches grafted into *the true Vine*—shall not diminish and fade away, but shall increase and be eternal.

In this part of the gospel Christ speaks to His Apostles, and through them to all the members of His mystical body, of *abiding* in Him.¹ Ten times He repeats this word, showing us by this repetition that there is not merely a possibility or

¹ “Mystice hic quisque pastor intelligat se vitem esse respectu ovium suarum, et princeps respectu populorum quos regit, et quisque paterfamilias comparatione suorum domesticorum. Et ut vitis est palmites producere, productos alere, et ad fructum ferendum succum emittere bonum; ita hi intelligant se ad oves pascendas et verbo Dei

tuendas et in justitia conservandas positos esse: quia secundum judicem populi sic et ministri ejus; et qualis rector civitatis, tales et inhabitantes in ea. Et ut est absurdum vitem proferre spinas aut tribulos, ita vitium pastorum est fructus justitiæ non edere, sed aut iniquitatis aut scandali.”—*Salmeron.*

even a probability of our falling from grace, but that there is an urgent danger of our so falling ; a need of constant distrust of ourselves, of watchfulness over ourselves, and of incessant prayer for preservation from falling away from Him, and at length being rejected like the worthless branches of the natural vine.

Hengsten-
berg.

•• “Almighty and everlasting God, who hast enabled Thy saints not only to believe in Thy Son, but also to suffer for His sake, extend Thy Divine aid also to our weakness, that as they breathed out their happy souls for the

hope of Thine everlasting mercy, we may at least attain it by a sincere confession of Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”—*Leonine Sacramentary* in Bright's ancient collects.

ST. PHILIP AND ST. JAMES' DAY.

ST. JOHN XIV. 1—14.

Ecclus.
xxxiv. 14.
John xvi. 22,
23.

(1) *Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in Me.*¹

Salmeron.

Sylveira.

Maldonatus.

John xiii. 36.

OUR Blessed Lord had just told His Apostles that He was going away from them ; He had predicted the very circumstances which should attend His death ; He had told them that one of their band, one of His own chosen ones, should betray Him ; and that on that very night Peter should deny Him thrice : He had added, that where He was going they were unable at that time to follow Him, though they should hereafter follow Him. Moreover, that great danger was threatening them was assured by His words bidding him who had no sword, to sell his garment and buy one. So that they knew from their Master's words that when His enemies, and therefore their enemies, should rage the most and be most triumphant, when they needed His presence the most, that then He should be away from them ; absent so far as it regarded that presence of which alone they had any true conception. These things were to them grounds for trouble, but especially the words which He had just used—*Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterwards* ; therefore He points them to the Source of strength against fear, and of comfort in distress. *Believe,*

¹ “The word πιστεύειν, followed by εἰς and an accusative, when said of a person in the New Testament, is never applied to a man, but only to God (see Vorst. de Heb. p. 676).” — *Wordsworth. Πιστεύετε.*—“The Greek leaves it undecided whether it is the imperative or the indicative : the reading of the Authorized Version seems most natural. Nonnius :

μὴ νόος ὑμείων δεδονημένος, ἄστατος εἶη,
ἀλλὰ Θεῷ καὶ ἐμοὶ πιστεύσατε.

S. Cyril, S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, h. l., seem to have understood this verse in the sense given in our version. But their translations differ, one saying ‘creditit,’ the others ‘credite.’ ” — *Malan's Notes on St. John.*

He says, *in God*; believe also that I, whom ye see, am God, and so will be ever with you, will never leave you, never be really absent from nor forsake you. Faith adds strength to the soul and enables it to resist trouble. Arias Mont.
Ph. Diez.

Our Blessed Lord does not here promise that His Apostles shall have nothing to trouble them;¹ He does not say that these predictions of coming evil, of His bodily absence, of Peter's fall, and of the treason of Judas, are not grounds for trouble and apprehensions; but in warning them against letting these things shake their faith in Him, whilst He does in effect tell them of very real troubles, He strengthens them against these sorrows, and teaches them how they may encounter the assaults of the Evil One, and, through faith in Him, abide unshaken and undismayed in the midst of troubles and dangers. Almost in the words and with a reference to the exhortation of the Psalmist, *Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God*, Christ animates the drooping spirits of His disciples, by pointing to the Source of comfort. Thus does He ever console His followers, not by taking away the cross, but by giving the strength to bear it. Nay, not only does Christ not take away the cross, He Himself places it on our shoulders; but, as He does so, He gives us the consolation of His grace and the power to bear it after Him. Guillaud.
Corn. & Lap.
Ps. xliii. 5, 6.
P. B. Vera.
Hengstenberg.
Barra lius.
Ferus.

Let not your heart be troubled. It is not all trouble which is here forbidden, not natural sorrow and distress, since we were told a few verses before that our Lord Himself was *troubled in spirit*; but the Apostles are warned of the effect of that trouble which reaches to and occupies the *heart*, and they are enjoined not to give way to the passion of grief. However much they might be distressed by sorrow and fear, they were not to let their will be disturbed; they were to remain unshaken in faith, with their heart and affections fixed on spiritual things.² Though we are unable to prevent John xiii. 21.
Salmeron.
Toletus.
Cajetan.

¹ "The prophet David saith, *A humbled spirit is an acceptable sacrifice to God*, and, *It was good for me that I was in trouble*. How, then, is it true which is here said by the Son of David, *Let not your heart be troubled*? Answer is made that the passions of the mind—as anger, fear, delight, and the like—are in their own nature neither simply commendable nor yet absolutely vituperable, but either good or bad as their object and ends are good and bad. To be troubled for sin

is a godly sorrow, causing repentance to salvation not to be repented of, and therefore grief for offending God and grieving His Spirit; yea, grieve much because thou canst grieve no more. But an inordinate trouble for the things of this world, arising either out of envy, sluggishness, or impatience, is forbidden in this sentence, *Let not your heart be troubled.*" —Boys.

² "Est quædam turbatio ex spiritu, ex ratione procedens, quæ laudabilis est, nec prohibetur [2 Cor. iii. 10]. Alia

Alex. Nat.

Toletus.

Faber Stap.

Menochius.

Siler.

Augustine.

Bruno.

Guilland.

our mind from feeling trouble and sorrow, yet a firm and unhesitating faith in the presence and love of our Saviour is able, by the grace of God, to prevent trouble from seizing upon and taking possession of the heart.¹ Since, then, their present distress and anxiety proceeded chiefly from this, that they only believed in the human nature of Christ, and were always relying on His corporeal presence, He removes the very ground of all their trouble by enlightening their understanding, that they might know His whole nature, and thus know that He was really present with them, however far He might be removed from them in body; and as they believed in the abiding presence of the Father, so He bids them also believe in Him as ever present with them. It is this faith which alone can still the raging of passion, which can take away the fear of man, which can assuage the violence of sorrow. It is this, and this alone, which can give rest and peace to the heart.²

Ye believe in God, believe also in Me—that is, As you believe in the Father, in the same way believe in Me. In these words is an emphatic declaration of the Divinity of Christ from His own mouth; for unless He were equal and one with the Father, He would not have united these two, and commanded them to believe not only in God the Father, but also in Him, the Eternal Son. In order that His disciples might not fear the danger which threatened them, nor death itself, He consoles them by telling them that He also is God. He seems to say to them, *Ye fear death for My sake, who am Man; fear not, for I am not only Man, but God, who will be ever with you, and, when ye die, will raise you to life again.*

It is not enough for us, then, to believe in God the Father; we are called upon also to believe in the Son. Not only in the Godhead in the abstract, but in the person of the Son; and not only in the Eternal Son as God, but in that Son as incarnate in the Person of Christ Jesus—that

est tristitia seu turbatio ipsius rationis; quæ non est laudabilis, quia abducit a propria rectitudine: et hæc prohibetur [Psalm xxxvii. 24], Justus non conturbabitur, quia Dominus supponit manum suam. Non enim turbari potest qui Deum semper habet.—*Th. Aquinas.*

¹ "Turbationem sentientis appetitus impedire non semper in nostra potestate est: sed cordis turbationem impedire possumus cum gratia Dei; si firma sit fides nostra, si pia in gratia Christi Jesu fiducia. . . . Fides cor

firmat, roborat, serenat, ut dicere possit, *Dominus illuminatio mea et salus mea; quem timebo? Dominus protector vitæ meæ; a quo trepidabo?* Fides itaque armatura est infracta et lata, quæ ignaviam ac terrorem avertit, et nequitiae tela irrita et inutilia prorsus efficit."—*Natalis Alex.*

² "Non turbetur cor vestrum, non diffidat, non formidet. Fides cordium serenitas et sedatio; infidelitas cordium inquietudo et turbatio."—*Faber Stapulensis.*

is, in both the human and the Divine natures which make up the one Person of the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind: God as the Father of Christ the only begotten Son; and Christ as the revelation of the Father to man. No one, indeed, can really believe in God the Father who does not at the same time, and with the like faith, believe in the Second Person of the ever-blessed Trinity—the Eternal Word—for the testimony of the Father was given to the Godhead of Jesus Christ.¹

Cyril.

Hengstenberg.

Lampe.

When danger threatens us, and when trouble and sorrow combine to assault the soul, let us remember the command of Christ, and His sure promise that all these things shall pass us by, and not be able to withdraw our heart from God, if only we have faith in the Saviour, and rely upon His promise to be ever with us. For the Father is more powerful than the mightiest of the things of earth, and will permit no evil to prevail against us.

Chrysostom.

(2) *In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

John xiii. 33, 36; xv. 15.
Zech. viii. 3.
Matt. xix. 28.
Mark x. 27.
Luke xviii. 27.
Rom. vi. 21.

Having said to Peter, *Thou canst not follow Me now*, lest the Apostles should think that they were for ever separated from their Master, He tells them, *I go to prepare a place for you*, that so they might have comfort in knowing that they should again be with Him. They had thought of His kingdom as though it were one of the kingdoms of earth, and were troubled when He was leaving this world, and was thus depriving them of all hope of inheriting the honours of such a kingdom. Christ bids them not be troubled, since the *mansions*,² the firm possessions which they were to receive in that kingdom, were to be enjoyed in heaven, and not upon earth. But though the words were spoken to them and also to us, they had their special application to the Apostles. Our Blessed Lord had just before said, in answer to an inquiry of Peter, that though he could not follow Him then, yet he should follow Him *afterwards*; then, lest it should seem that the promise was made to Peter, and not to the rest of the Apostles, He tells them that in His *Father's house* were *many mansions*, abodes for all, and that He was

Chrysostom.

Lightfoot.

John xiii. 36.

¹ "Many men *imagine* they can believe in God without being also obliged to believe in Jesus. I have never met with a man who did."—*Stier*.

πολλοί: non οικίαι πολλαί: non σκηναί πολλαί: sed μοναί, mansiones. Da wir in ewigkeit bleiben sollen. Ut omnino de salute nostra per Christum parta certi simus. Da wird uns kein Teuffel anstreiben."—*Erasmus Schmidt*.

² "Μοναί πολλαί. Non dicit τόποι

- Chrysostom. going away to prepare these habitations for all, so that, however many might accept of His offer and enter into His glory, yet should it always be that *there is room*.¹ But these words were not spoken for them only; and in telling us that the *mansions* were *many*, and that they were prepared for those whom He was making fit for them, He tells us how large and wide are the benefits of His passion: that He was dying not merely for some few chosen ones, but for the *many* who, living to Him here, should hereafter fill those *mansions* of glory.
- Salmeron.
- Bengel. It is a *house* to which the children of God are admitted, a place prepared for that family of which God is the Father. And our Blessed Lord is not content with telling us that this is a large house, but He says that it has *many mansions*, thus implying variety in the abodes of the just: for though, beyond this plural form, there is nothing distinctly asserted as to different degrees of honour and glory in that *house*, yet this truth may be gathered as well from the use of the word *many* as also from other portions of Holy Scripture. *For as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead.* The saints have allotted unto them different measures of Divine glory, as there are stars of different magnitude in the visible firmament. All those who have laboured unto the end of the day in His vineyard shall receive the *penny* which the great Master of the vineyard has promised to each, but yet shall every man receive according to his works—to those who have laboured long and much, a greater reward than to those who have been called into the vineyard at the eleventh hour, and who have laboured but little in their Master's work.²
- 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.
- Matt. xx. 13.
- Matt. xvi. 27.
- Augustine.

¹ "Istæ mansiones sunt excubiæ fidelium, sunt absconsiones divinatorum secretorum, sunt pulchritudines divinarum luminum, sunt ordines angelorum Deo assistantium, sunt protectiones victorum, sunt promptuaria omnium voluptatum."—*Alb. Magnus*.

² "Nullus eorum qui Dei mandata servant, et in eorum observantia fideliter perseverant, alienabitur ab illa domo, ubi mansionem pro suo quisque accepturus est merito. Denarius quidem ille æqualis est omnibus, quem Paterfamilias eis qui operati sunt in vinea jubet dare omnibus, non in eo discernens qui minus et qui amplius laborarunt: quo utique denario vita significatur æterna, ubi amplius alio nemo vivit, quoniam vivendi non est

diversa in æternitate mensura. Sed multæ mansiones diversas meritorum in una vita æterna significant dignitates. *Alia est gloria solis, alia gloria lunæ, alia gloria stellarum. Stella enim ab stella differt in gloria. Sic et resurrectio mortuorum.* [1 Cor. xv. 41.] Tamquam stellæ, sancti diversas mansiones diversæ claritatis; tamquam in cælo, sortiuntur in regno; sed propter unum denarium nullus separatur à regno: atque ita *Deus erit omnia in omnibus* [1 Cor. xv. 28], ut, quoniam caritatis est, per caritatem fiat, ut quod habent singuli, commune sit omnibus. Sic enim quisque etiam ipse habet, cum amat in altero quod ipse non habet."—

Augustine.

These mansions of rest and glory were prepared from the beginning, but now was this truth manifested and anew revealed to men, and the way laid open by the death of Christ. He prepared these *mansions* by opening again to us that way which had been closed by the sins of men, for only by His Cross and Passion were the gates of heaven thrown open to sinners. He prepares a place in reality who removes all hindrances from the approach to that place, so that He who takes away sin from us, thus taking away that which separates us from God and from His presence, prepares heaven for us. In this way, then, does Christ prepare the mansions of glory, by preparing those who shall dwell for ever therein.

Ferus.

Cyril.

Guillaud.

Augustine.

Viewed with reference to the act of Christ Himself—the objective truth contained in these words—this preparation was effected—

(1) By His death, by which He took away the power and the penalty of those sins which had interposed between us and God, and had separated man from communion with his Maker. Thus it was when, dying upon the cross, He promised an entrance into heaven to penitents by the assurance given to the penitent thief in the words, *To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.*

Luke xxiii.
43.

(2) By His ascension into heaven, to which act these words seem especially to refer; for in ascending into heaven He gave this pledge to all the members of that body of which He was the head, to all those whose *life is hid with Christ in God*, that they also should enter in and dwell with Him for ever in that place of happiness and glory: and not only a pledge, for in the entrance of our *forerunner* (*πρόδρομος*) into heaven we have the entrance by anticipation of the members of Christ; for where the head is, there must needs be the members also.¹

Col. iii. 3.

Lampe.

Hengsten-
berg.

Viewed with reference to the work of Christ in the soul of man, He prepares His chosen ones for that place whither He, their forerunner, has already entered,²

Heb. vi. 20.

(1) By withdrawing from man His corporeal presence, so that sight may give place in the heart to faith, which is *the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*. This faith is the very life of the just, and it is that which strengthens the heart of man.

Bede.

Heb. xi. 1.
Hab. ii. 4.
Acts xv. 9.

(2) By exciting and drawing the desires of man after

¹ "Tunc locus paratur, si ex fide vivatur, credatur, desideretur, ut desideratus habeatur. Desiderium dilectionis est præparatio mansionis."—*Gorranus*.

² "Non paratus locus alicui est, quando ipse quidem dignus est loco, sed impedimentum aliquod ne loco illo potiatur adest."—*Cajetan*.

John xii. 32.
Matt. xxiv.
28.
Matt. vi. 21.

Him, as He said, *If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto Me. For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. And where the treasure of man is, there will also his heart be.*

1 John ii. 1,
2.
Royard.

(3) By interceding with the Father for us ; for *if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and He is the propitiation for our sins : and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Barradius.

Our Blessed Lord had already armed His Apostles for their conflict with the world, by the gift of faith in Himself : for He not only bade them believe in Him, but He gave them at the same time the power so to do. With these words He inspires them with the hope of dwelling with Him in His eternal kingdom. And in saying *I go to prepare a place for you*, instead of simply saying *I die*, Christ carried them, as He carries us, beyond the thought of death to that which was to come afterwards, and speaks of His departure from this world merely as a going to the Father, and that for the sake of the disciples, who were sorrowing at the prospect of His departure. In this He was the true Ark of the Covenant, which *went before them in the three days' journey to search out a resting place for them.*

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Lightfoot.
Numb. x. 33.

The death of the righteous is but their close reunion with Christ their head. For this union all the mysteries of the faith are but the preparatives—

(1) Christ prepares us for this by His death upon the cross, the sacrifice of Himself to put away those sins which are the hindrances to union, since they separate men from God.

(2) In heaven He is ever preparing us by the grace which He gives ; this is the especial fruit of His ascension, the work of His mediation.

We must respond to the work of Christ within us by the sacrifice of ourselves, by imitating His sanctification and self-sacrifice, by rising to heaven and dwelling with Him in heart and soul.

Quesnel.

John xii. 26;
xvii. 24;
xviii. 28.
Acts i. 11.
1 Thess. iv.
17.

(3) *And if I go¹ and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive² you unto Myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

¹ "Si—id est cum."—*Corn. à Lapide, Menochius, et alii.* "Postquam abiero."—*Mariana.* "'Εάν for ὅταν."—*Beng.*

² Παραλήψομαι.—Most of the ancient versions translate this word by an equivalent one meaning *take*. See

Malan's Gospel of S. John in the Eleven Oldest Versions. "Strictly speaking, 'to receive' differs from 'to take.' A man *receives* that which is actually put into his hands ; he *takes* that which is not put into his hands, but to grasp which he stretches out his hand. The

As concerns the place, it is already prepared, but for *you* it has to be prepared. *If I go*—according to the flesh departing from your sight—*I will come again* by the presence of the Godhead; I will come by the Spirit; that is, I will

so abide in you, and so transform you, that you shall be incorporated into *Me*, as members are united to the head.¹

Where Christ works, there He comes: hence He says, *that where I am*, not where I shall be, but *where I am*, to signify His abiding presence. As God, He is ever with the Father,

and yet ever in the midst of His disciples on earth: as man, He went to His Father, and departed from this earth at His ascension. And then, in order to remove their fear because

of His approaching departure, Christ tells them that, so far from leaving them for ever, He is but going before to prepare that place for them in which they shall enjoy His company for ever—*that where I am, there ye may be also*.²

I will come, that is, He will come—

(1) By His particular judgments to every man whilst on earth, by His sending to men the Holy Spirit, by His visitation at the hour of death, of which He speaks when He says, *Surely I come quickly*.

(2) At the general judgment at the end of the world. This is a promise of coming in the same manner in which the disciples then saw Him, a visible and corporeal coming at His second advent—a coming which shall be visible to the whole world, when in His body, and surrounded by His angels, He shall appear to judge the quick and the dead.

And let us note that our Blessed Lord does not say, *I will come again*, but *I am coming* (ἐρχομαι): the present tense giving great force and energy to His promise, and reminding us of the truth that He is ever coming to us. All, indeed, that He is now doing is a coming to us, a preparing us for Him and for that place which He has prepared for us. This

latter is the strict meaning of λαμβάνω.—*Wade's Notes on the Version of the "Five Clergymen."* Webster, in *Syntax and Synonyms of the New Testament*, says "Παραλαμβάνω points to an objective reception," to a taking that which has yet the power of refusing to be taken. It implies the will of the taker, without, however, wholly denying the will of that which is taken.

¹ "Et iterum venio, seu venturus sum post meam resurrectionem: et accipiam vos ad meipsum: Imprimis assumam vos credentes ad me per missionem Spiritus Sancti, quos mihi colligam et complectar."—Guilliaud.

² "Venit Dominus in Suo primo adventu ad locum parandum. Venit et veniet iterum particulariter in cujuslibet electi obitu, accipiendo ad beatitudinem animæ, et qui ipsi fide et charitate ministraverunt cum Ipso sunt secundum spiritum et animam à vinculis mortis ereptam, et sic quotidie venit, qui adventus tamen non est per præsentiam corporalem sed gratiam. Veniet tertio universaliter in novissimo die, et tunc erunt cum Ipso in regno cœlestis gloriæ in anima et corporibus resumptis et suo modo conformibus animæ et corpori gloriœ humanitatis Ejus."—Konigsteyn.

Bengel.

Alcuin.

Arias Mont.

Hengstenberg.

Guilliaud.

Alb. Magnus.

Menochius.
Rev. xxii. 12,
20.

Lienard.

Origen.
Toletus.

Malan.

coming began at the Resurrection; it is carried on during the whole of our spiritual life, our justification, which is the fruit of His resurrection.¹

Alford.

As Joseph, who was the type of Christ, when seated at the right hand of Pharaoh received his brethren, so also at the right hand of God the Father does Christ receive His brethren, and make them partakers of His glory.

Lampe.

(4) *And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.*

However blinded they might be by their prepossessions, and unable to understand the force of the words which He had so often spoken to them, He had already told them that He was going to His Father in heaven, and that the way to heaven was through faith in Him, through His life, passion, cross, as well as through the doctrines which He had taught them whilst He was with them on earth.

Corn. à Lap.

They knew this truth, indeed, though they knew not that they knew it. They knew the way since they knew Him, who is the Way to the Father; but though they knew Him in His Incarnate life, they knew not that He was the living Way, by which alone men could attain unto God.²

Augustine.

Toletus.

(5) *Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know the way?*

We know not. Thomas is here speaking not for himself only, he is the mouthpiece of the whole body of the Apostles. But though he spake consciously for them only, yet he spake unconsciously for us also; for as the denial of Peter avails to take away presumption, and was a revelation to us of our weakness when self-confident, and as the incredulity of Thomas afterwards added confirmation to our faith in the resurrection of our Blessed Lord, so the ignorance of this same Apostle now conduced not only to his instruction in the faith, but has added also to our knowledge.³

Dion. Carth.

Gorranus.

¹ "*Iterum venio. Non dicit veniam, sed venio, quasi dicat, Jamjam proximè adventus Meus adest.*"—*Toletus.*

² "*Scitis—id est, scire facillè potestis, et debetis—quia sæpè à Me audistis, quod eam ad Patrem in cœlum, ac viam in cœlum esse Meam fidem, doctrinam, vitam, passionem, et crucem. Et sciebant Apostoli Christum hæc dixisse; sed necdum illa intelligebant, unde nec*

eorum meminerant. Unde August.: 'Sciebant quidem,' ait, 'sed se scire nesciebant: sciebant habitu, nesciebant actu; sciebant obscure et confuse, nesciebant distinctè et in particulari, quomodo scilicet Christus sit via, Pater vero sit meta et terminus viæ. Ita Ribera, Toletus, Maldonatus et alii.'

Corn. à Lapide.

³ "*Sciebant, quia audierant unde*

Thomas, indeed, was persuaded that neither the termination of our Blessed Lord's journey, nor the way to the Father, was known to him nor to the rest of the Apostles of Christ; but he seems to say that, in his estimation, it would not be difficult to know the way, provided only that he knew the end. Christ here tells him that he knew both. So is it oftentimes with us. We possess some confused notion of the truth: we know as a matter of fact, without any clear or conscious knowledge, and are really ignorant, not because of the want of a revelation of the truth, but of our application of mind to master that which has been revealed.

Luca Brug.

(6) *Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, [and] the Truth, and the Life:¹ no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*

Isa. xxxv. 8.
John i. 4;
vi. 33, 40;
viii. 32;
x. 9, 28;
xi. 25;
xvii. 2.
Heb. ix. 8.
1 John v. 20.

They sought to know the way by which He was going, and the end of that journey of which He had spoken. Christ tells them that He is the Way which leads to the true Life, which is God; that the Father is Himself the End of all man's strivings, and that Christ is the Way. Faith in Him, belief in the doctrine which He teaches, the grace which He gives, and the life which we derive from Him, is that which we need to attain unto heaven. He, then, is the Way, the living Way, by which we are to walk—

Corn. & Lap.

(1) Because by His death and passion He has opened a way for us, by which we all have *access by faith* unto the Father.

Jans. Gand.
Maldonatus.
Rom. v. 2.

(2) Because He points out to us the way in which we are to persevere by firmly holding those truths which He has taught us.²

(3) Because He gives us faith, grace, and holiness by which we may approach the Father, and without which we can neither see God nor enter heaven.

Heb. xii. 14.

(4) Because He goes before us in that way by His holy life and sufferings: treading it first, that we may follow by

scire potnissent: sed ignorabant, quia audita non penetrarant animo."—*Luca Brugensis.*

¹ 'Εγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή. "In textu Græco singulis his tribus dictionibus suis præponitur articulus. Ita quòd significatur, Ego sum illa via, et illa veritas, et illa vita: ut intelligamus quòd Jesus non est quæcunque via, sed suprema via et suprema

veritas et suprema vita."—*Cajetan.*

"Via vera et recta et quæ ducit ad vitam, seu vivificans."—*Mariana, Scholia in Vet. et Nov. Test.*

² "Una ex causis, propter quas Redemptor noster via appellatur, est ab effectu, quia legem nobis dedit, per quam ad Patrem proficisceremur."—*Ph. Diez.*

Corn. & Lap. imitating the perfect pattern of His life, and may thus ascend to that heaven into which He has entered for us.¹

Arias Mont. Our Blessed Lord, then, is *the Way* of approach to the Tree of Life: *the Way* to that paradise which men could not otherwise have entered, because of their sins. And in speaking of Himself, and the Christian's life through Him, as *the Way*, He would show us that there is to be a daily progress, a constant advancement in the knowledge of the Saviour, and in the fruits of that knowledge, holiness of life. It is the characteristic of the living members of Christ that *they go from strength to strength*, confirmed daily both in holiness and in the knowledge of the truth, until they reach the end of all their labour and of all their trials in the presence of the God of their life.

Pa. lxxxiv. 7.

Basil.

Our Blessed Lord, by virtue of His human nature, is *the Way* for all men to the Father, the one end and object of faith; but He is also *the Way* to Himself, inasmuch as He also is the object of faith, since He is very God—one with the Almighty Father. The humanity of Christ, then, is *the way* by which the Godhead is known; so that as man He is the way, as God He is the very end of that way—the termination of our journey.²

Luca Brug.

When, then, He said to Thomas, *I am the Way*, He showed His Apostles that they knew *the way* of which they asked, because they knew Him who was the Way itself; hence, also, He teaches us that *the way* in which He was going, the life which He was manifesting, whether by His death or by His rising again, was *the way* in which we must go to the Father.³ Then, lest we should think of Him only as human—as Man, of surpassing holiness, indeed, but still only as a man whose footsteps we are to follow, as we would follow those of any other man—He adds that He is *the Truth and the Life*, the supreme Truth and the highest and most enduring Life. *The Truth*, in whom there can be no admixture of falsehood. *The Life*, from union with whom death shall not be able to separate those who are grafted into Him. The Maker of *the way* which leadeth to life; the Teacher of the *truth* which directs us to the *life* itself; and the Giver of that eternal *life* which is the inheritance of those who

Cajetan.

Chrysostom.

¹ "O quisquis Paradisum ambis, crucem ama, certissimam ad Paradisum viam."—*Hartung*.

² "*Via per quam itur: veritas ad quam itur: vita qua fit ut eatur.*"—*Adr. Mangotius*.

³ "Dixit Sc et viam esse et viæ terminum: quia cum in eo duæ sint

naturæ, divina et humana, quoad humanam via est, quoad divinam finis æternus: quoad humanam via est, quoad divinam vera vita; quia per ejus merita si debita dispositio præcedat, gratia nobis communicatur ad veram vitam consequendam."—*Ph. Diez*.

hold to that truth and walk in that way—the only true *way* which leadeth unto *life*: the *way* without error: the *truth* without falsehood: the *life* without death.¹

Our Blessed Lord, then, is *the Way* as man: He is *the Truth and the Life* as God.² He is the *Way*—

(1) By His merits, His humiliation and sufferings and death, by which He has laid open a road for us.

(2) By the example of His unsinning life.

(3) By the living truths and the doctrines which He gives to all mankind.

But again, He is *the Truth*—not one truth merely, or one who is true, but the essential Verity Himself.³ So that wherever there is truth, there is some spark or ray from Him who is all truth. He is *the Truth*, then—

(1) By His essence. He is truth essentially, and all untruth is abhorrent to His nature.⁴

(2) He is *the Truth* in all the words which He utters, since He cannot deceive—*He cannot lie*.

(3) He is *the Truth* in His works, since all He does is consonant with the Divine nature.

(4) He is *the Truth*, as opposed to the shadows and the promises of the law, of which He is the antitype, the substance, and the fulfilment; *for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*.

He is *the Way*, because He gives us the law by which we are to live, and teaches us, by His word and example, to overcome the world, and to live *holily, and justly, and unblameably* in this present life. He is *the Truth*, since He has given us the right rule of faith, and teaches us all Divine truth necessary to our salvation. He is *the Life*, for that life which we desire, and which is the consummation of our nature, no one can give save Christ alone. For no man can come to the Father, who is life eternal, unless he walk purely and in love through Christ, who is *the Way*; unless he believe in Christ, who is *the Truth*; unless he confide wholly

¹ “Ego sum via incipientium; veritas proficientium; vita perfectorum. Via ducens, veritas lucens, vita agens. Via in exemplo, veritas in doctrina, vita in præmio promissa. Via sum non errans quærentibus, veritas non fallens invenientibus, vita indeficiens permanentibus.”—*Salmeron*.

² “Via in exemplum, veritas in promissis, vita in præmium.”—*S. Bernard*.

³ “Christus veritas est, non restricta contractaque ad aliquam rem, sed abso-

luta—id est, essentia—eo modo quod ens et verum convertuntur. Deinde veritas est adæquatio rei ad intellectum, quando intellectus rem uti est concipit; et ita nihil est aliud quàm perfecta ipsius rei conceptio et definitio et perfectum nomen, quo res tota penitus explicatur: qua ratione Jesus veritas est Patris—id est, Sermo Ipsum repræsentans, totumque Patrem exprimens.”—*Salmeron*.

⁴ “Ubi est fictio, non est Deus.”—*Petrus Blesensis*.

Corn. & Lap. in Him who, so far forth as He is God, is eternal *life*. Since, then, He is *the Way*, He will lead us: inasmuch as He is *the Truth*, He cannot lie or deceive us in His promises: because He is *the Life*, death cannot separate us from Him. Let us note the order of these words. First *the way*, then *the truth*, and then *the life*. If we walk in Him *the way*, we shall attain to the *truth*, and so obtain everlasting *life*.¹

Œcumenius.

Ph. Diaz.

Christ Jesus, then, in the fulness of His nature Incarnate God, is *the Way* by which man desires to go; *the Truth* to which he desires to attain; *the Life* in which he desires to abide. *The Way* to those who seek; *the Truth* to those who find; *the Life* eternal to those who follow Him.²

Augustine.

No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.

Whilst claiming for Himself the Divine nature, and whilst frequently asserting the identity and therefore the consubstantiality of His own nature with that of the Father, our Blessed Lord as positively asserts the distinction between the persons of the Father and of the Son; for though no one can come to the Father but by Him, and though He is in the Father and the Father is in Him, yet he by whom we come to another must needs be distinct from that other to whom we come.

Lampe.

No man cometh to the Father unless by the doctrine of Christ, unless by faith in Christ, unless by obedience to the commands of Christ, unless by imitation of the life and conversation of Christ, unless through the merits of Christ, unless he is made a living member of Christ's body, a true branch of Him who is the true Vine; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved than the name of Christ Jesus.

Luca Brug.

Arias Montanus.
John xv. 1.
Acts iv. 12.

We come, then, to the Father—

(1) By the knowledge which we have of the Son, who was manifested that in Him we might see the Father.

(2) By the merits of Christ, by the imitation of His life, by which we are led onward to real union with the Father and abide in communion with Him.³

Salmeron.

¹ "Attendite horum verborum ordinem: prius enim viam, mox veritatem, in fine verò vitam posuit, ut doceret neminem vitam assequi posse, nisi prius per veritatem transeat."—Ph. Diaz.

² "Sine via non itur; sine veritate non cognoscitur; sine vita non vivitur. Ego sum via quam sequi debes; veritas cui credere debes; vita quam sperare debes. Ego sum via inviolabilis, veri-

tas infallibilis, vita interminabilis. Ego sum via rectissima, veritas suprema, vita vera, vita beata, vita uncreata. Si manseris in via Mea, cognosces veritatem; et veritas liberabit te, et apprehendes vitam æternam."—Th. d. Kempis, *De Imit. Christi*, lib. iii. § 56.

³ "Trià sunt in homine quæ ad sanctitatem pertineant, scilicet actio et contemplatio et intentio: et ista perfi-

In a previous part of the Gospel of St. John we read that *no man can come to Christ except the Father which hath sent Him draw him*. Here He says, *No man cometh to the Father but by Me*. Thus He teaches us that the work of the ever-blessed Trinity is undivided; that all operations external to the Godhead are the work of the whole Three Persons in the undivided Godhead. John vi. 44.
Cajetan.

(7) *If ye had known Me, ye should have known My Father also: and from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him*. John viii. 19.

God they knew, but the Father they knew not yet. We advance from the knowledge of the Son to that of the Father, so that if we know the Son, we must also needs know the Father; but if we know not the Son, who is the *brightness of His glory and the express image of the person of the Father*,¹ we know not the Father, since our knowledge is imperfect, is that of an abstract God, and not of The God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Hence our Blessed Lord says, *If ye had known Me* really as I am, ye would have known Me to have been the only begotten Son of the Father, and so you *should have known My Father also*, because you cannot know nor even conceive of a Son and not know of a Father.² If, then, the Apostles had known aught save the humanity—if they had pierced beyond this, and had seen the Godhead which was veiled in human flesh—they would have known and recognised the Father also, since, because of the identity of the Divine nature of the Father and of the Son, it were impossible to know the one fully and not to know the other. Chrysostom.
Salmeron.
Tirinus.
Arias Mont.
Jansen Yp.

In these words our Blessed Lord seems to answer an objection which would naturally present itself to the minds of His Apostles. Though Thou art *the Way*, and the Father is the termination of the journey which Thou art going, yet how can we know whither Thou goest, since we know not

ciuntur à Christo: nam activam exercentibus Christus est via; in contemplativa vero perseverantibus Christus est veritas: sed activarum et contemplantium intentiarum dirigit ad vitam, scilicet æternam."—*Th. Aquinas*.

¹ "Χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ."—*Jo. Damascene in Ep. Paul. ad Heb. i. 3*.

² "Pater non erat in carne per unitatem personæ; sed erat in Verbo

incarnato per unitatem naturæ, atque ita videbatur in Verbo incarnato, non per se sed per accidens: caro per se videbatur, divinitas Filii ratione carnis unitæ, divinitas Patris ratione divinitatis Filii inseparabilis. Viderant deinde Patrem ratione operum divinorum à Christo editorum: quando enim illa videbant, videbant et Patrem, qui illorum cum Christo unus auctor erat."—*Luca Brugensis*.

the Father? Again, if the Father is the end and Thou the way, how art Thou *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*—the Way, and the end of the Way itself? Our Blessed Lord seems to reply to these questions: I am one in essence, in divinity, with the Father; wherefore, if ye know Me, ye must needs know the Father. The Apostles had believed and had confessed Christ to be the Son of God; they had not reached to that further truth which indeed is dependent upon this other—that He was consubstantial with the Father: the full knowledge of this was only revealed to them as a practical truth by the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Corn. & Lap.

(8) *Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father,¹ and it sufficeth us.*

Corn. & Lap.

Exod. xxxiii.
13, 18.
ver. 20.
Bruno.

Philip, so far from understanding the meaning of our Lord's words—that they who had known Him had also known the Father—desired to see the Father, not by faith, but with the eyes of the body, in the same way that he had beheld the Son. His request was the same as that which Moses made: *I pray Thee, if I have found grace in Thy sight, show me now Thy way, that I may know Thee; . . . I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory.* To which request God answered: *Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live.*

It sufficeth us. For himself and the rest of the Apostles of Christ, Philip, in these words, seems to declare—

Chrysostom.

(1) We desire nothing more than that Thou shouldst show us the Father; we need ask Thee no more.

(2) The sight of the Father is sufficient for our happiness and to remove all that trouble from the heart of which Thou hast spoken, all sorrow, all fear, since the Father is God, and to see Him is man's perfect blessedness.

Cyril.
Stier.

Hilary, lib.
vii. De
Trinit.
Euthymius.

(3) This will be sufficient to confirm our belief in Thee, and in the promise which Thou hast just made us of those eternal mansions which we shall share with Thee.

John xii. 45.
Col. i. 15.
Heb. i. 3.

(9) *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father.*

¹ "*Ostende clarè, exhibe oculis nostris præsentem. Credimus in Patrem Tuum, sicut in Te: et potuisti Eum nobis ostendisse imperfectè et obscurè.*

'Non enim visum negavit,' ait Hilarius, 'sed ostendit sibi rogavit.' — *Luca Brugensis.*

He says not, Hast thou not seen Me? but, *Hast thou not known Me?* They, indeed, had all seen Him, but yet they had not pierced through the veil of the flesh, and known Him in the reality of His twofold nature, God and Man.¹ Theophylact.
 And this ignorance of the true nature of the Saviour was not peculiar to Philip, but was common to him and to the rest of the Apostles, who, equally with Philip, needed instruction and enlightenment. Hence Christ said, *Have I been so long time with you, revealing My power and Divinity in the miracles which I wrought as signs of a present God, and yet have none of you known me?* Guillaud.
Bruno.

Our Blessed Lord tells them that they had *seen the Father* in seeing the Son.² The word *seen* is not limited to the bodily sense: the spirit on earth sees by the eye of faith; the spirit in glory sees by the light of that glory. If, then, they had seen with the eye of the body Him who is one in essence with the Father, and if they had seen with the eye of faith the Divine nature manifested in the actions of Christ, they would have seen in Him the Father also.³ He who saw Barradius.
 more in Christ than His flesh, which is but the veil, saw the Divinity, and he who saw the Divinity, saw not merely the Divinity of the Son, but of the Father likewise, for these two are one.⁴ He who saw Christ's works, and recognised the power by which these works were wrought, saw more than His human nature, and therefore saw by faith the Corn. & Lep.
 essential presence of the Father—the essence, though not the person.

God is one—not only one in species, but one in undivided substance. He, therefore, who sees Christ sees Him who is God, sees Him who is one with the Father in undivided nature, and sees, therefore, the Father.⁵ When we look on

¹ "*Qui videt me, videt et Patrem meum.* Hoc est, si pater meus humanam carnem, ut ego assumeret, cum unus unius essentiae, unius intellectus, et unius voluntatis Deus simus, nihil plus corporeis oculis videretis, quam nunc videtis: quia quicquid ipse facio, quicquid dico, ipse etiam praearet, et diceret: ita natus esset, ita vixisset, ita mortuus esset, ut ego moriturus sum Existimate cum me viderit, Patrem etiam hominem factum videre: *Quia Ego in Patre, et Pater in me est.*"—*Ph. Diez.*

² "Non quod Filius idem sit qui Pater, sed quia idem est quod Pater."—*Estius.*

³ "Amare Deum videre est."—

Augustine.

⁴ "Τοσοῦτον χρόνον ἔγω μεθ' ὑμῶν, καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωκάς με, Φίλιππε; ὁ ἑώρακώς με ἑώρακε τὸν πατέρα· ἐστὶ μὲν ὁ υἱὸς εἰκὼν τοῦ πατρὸς φυσικὴ ἀπαράλλακτος, κατὰ πάντα ὁμοῖα τῷ πατρὶ πλὴν τῆς ἀγεννησίας καὶ τῆς πατρότητος. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ πατήρ, γεννήτωρ ἀγέννητος· ὁ δὲ υἱὸς γεννητὸς, καὶ οὐ πατήρ· καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον εἰκὼν τοῦ υἱοῦ."—*Joh. Damascene de Imag. Orat. iii. § 18.*

⁵ "Attende, quod Pater non erat in carne per unitatem personae sed erat in Verbo incarnato per unitatem naturae, et in Christo incarnato videbatur Pater."—*Th. Aquinas.*

Christ with the bodily eyes, we behold the humanity : when we fix upon Him the eye of the mind, we see the Divinity : we recognise in all His works the power and the operation of God, as in the actions of a man we are able to trace the mind and intelligence of the man. Since, then, the Deity is, as we have seen, undivided, in seeing the Divinity which is in Christ we see that of the Father—one undivided substance existing in the Three Persons of the Godhead.¹

Corn à Lap.

In these words of our Blessed Lord we have the declaration of the consubstantial nature of the Father and of the Son, which truth is shown—

(1) In that Jesus is so truly God, that those who saw Him saw therefore the Father : in this we have a denial of the assertions of Arianism.

(2) That He is not only God, but of one and the self-same substance as the Father (*ὁμοούσιος*) ; for unless He were so, it might be possible to see the Son and not see the Father, or to see the Father and not see the Son.

John x. 30.
Chrysostom.
Hilary.

(3) We have also here the declaration of the distinction of persons between the Father and the Son, for even when He declares the oneness of the Father and the Son, He asserts also that this oneness consists of the two persons of the Father and the Son : *I and My Father are one*. In this He contradicts the heresy of the Sabellians.

Bengel.

As the soul which is unseen may be perceived by means of what it does through the instrumentality of the body, so may the Father be seen by what He does through the Son.

John v. 19 ;
vii. 16 ;
viii. 23 ;
x. 38 ;
xii. 49 ;
xvii. 21,
23.

(10) *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself : but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.*

Alb. Magnus.

The Father is in the Son as the source of that Godhead which is possessed equally by the Father and the Son. The Son is in the Father, as the river is in the fountain from which it proceeds, by virtue of that nature which He has received from the Father.²

¹ "Mentis oculis videtur dupliciter, vel per lumen fidei, vel per lumen gloriæ. Verba Domini, *Qui videt Me videt et Patrem Meum*, de visione per aliud intelligenda sunt—id est, per humanitatem. Ut enim per humanitatem videbatur in Christo Verbum. videbatur etiam Pater, qui Deus est, unius naturæ cum Verbo. Attamen

Pater videbatur ratione naturæ divinæ, Verbum etiam ratione personæ ; quoniam persona Patris non assumpsit humanitatem, sed persona Filii."—*Barradius*.

² "Licet Pater non sit Filius, et Filius non sit Pater, eadem tamen est Patris et Filii notio, ut eadem est Patris et Filii substantia et deitas.

The identity of the Father and the Son, as to their nature, is shown in this—that the very doctrine which the Son declares, *the words which He speaks*, are not His only, but those of the Father also. And in this assertion as to His *words* Christ includes His works, which are in like manner not His only, but because both are His they are also the words and the works of the Father, with whom the Son is inseparably one. In the former verse He had asserted the identity of the essence of Himself and His Father; now He makes a similar assertion as to the common operation and will of the Persons in the Godhead. He who denies the oneness of the will of the Father and of the Son denies that Jesus is the Mediator and the Redeemer of mankind. He, again, who denies that the Father is in the Son denies the necessary reconciliation of man to God by the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ.

Guillaud.

Œcumenius.

Lampe.

The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works. These words of the Saviour are not human words but Divine, and proceed from that nature which He has in common with the Father. These are, therefore, the Father's words; for when the Father gave to the Son that nature which He has consubstantial with the Father, He gave also to Him these words and works—His own omnipotence and operation.

Corn. à Lap.

Maldonatus.
Corn. à Lap.

As words are a manifestation of the wisdom or intelligence of the speaker, so are the words of Christ manifestations of that Divine wisdom which was in Him. It was by speaking, indeed, that He did the works which proclaim His power. It was by His word, and not by medical skill nor by any other human instrumentality, that He healed the sick. For when the Saviour in His miracles made use of any outward means they were ever such as were in themselves powerless without His will and word to effect His merciful purpose.

Alb. Magnus.

Bruno.

(11) *Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works' sake.*

John v. 36;
x. 38.

Believe that I am Divine for the sake of those works which ye cannot deny to be Divine. In this He at once pointed out the testimony which His works bore to His claim to be one with the Father, and left His Apostles a

Maldonatus.

. . . Quiescat itaque, Philippe, et cesset tua stolidi postulatio; nec quæras post-hac inseparabiles separatim videre; et firmissimè credas, excepta proprietate personali, Me nulla in re esse diversum

à Patre; et hisce verbis mentem affigito, Ego in Patre et Pater in Me est inseparabili quidem naturæ et substantiæ et potestatis et gloriæ consortio."—*Jo. Arberus.*

ground of comfort in the midst of their natural distress at His absence from them in the body. Thus He tells them that He could not do those *works* which were the manifestation of omnipotence, unless He had been Divine. He also, in effect, tells them that when, through the strength which He had given them, they should do like works, these would be an evidence to them that He was yet with them and helping them.

Toletus.

In these words we are taught—

(1) The distinct personality of the Father and the Son.¹

(2) The essential unity and consubstantiality of these two, so that the one is not seen nor known without the other.

(3) The mysterious union—or circumincession—of these two, so that what one does the other does also, for they are inseparable in power and in operation as well as in essence.²

Alex. Nat.

Matt. xxi. 21.
Mark xvi. 17.
Luke x. 17.
Acta ii. 4;
v. 16;
viii. 7;
x. 46;
xvi. 18;
xix. 6.
1 Cor. xii. 10,
28.

(12) *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.*

Corn. & Lap.
Ephes. iv. 8.

That this power was to be given them by Himself, He shows by these words; and tells them the reason why they were to be endued with power: *because I go unto My Father*. Christ procured this power to His disciples by His passion, and it was when He was ascending from this earth, that He gave such great and excellent *gifts unto men*. And we may note that He says, not they shall do a greater work than He has done, but *greater works*—that is, He is not referring to the one perfect work which He came to do, and which He accomplished when He ascended into heaven—the

¹ “Hac gnome significatur perfecta et intima conjunctio et inhabitatio unius personæ divinæ in alia, et è converso; qua fit ut Pater sit in Filio et Spiritu Sancto, Filius in Patre et Spiritu Sancto, Spiritus Sanctus in Patre et Filio: quam Damascenus, lib. i. de Fide, c. 11, vocat περιχώρησιν, et ex illo Scolastici vocant circumincessionem: de quo mysterio agit S. Aug. lib. vi. de Trinit. c. ult., S. Hilar. lib. iv. de Trinit., S. Ambros. in cap. xiii. Epist. 2 ad Corinth. ‘Singula,’ ait S. Aug. “sunt in singulis et omnia in singulis, et singula in omnibus et omnia in

omnibus, et unum omnia.’ Singulæ ergo personæ divinæ in aliis singulis non tantum quoad essentiam, sed etiam quoad relationem et personam sibi propriam inexistunt, quia omnes sibi invicem sunt intimæ et conjunctissimæ, uti ex Suarez et aliis fusiùs ostendi Isaiæ, c. xlv. 14, ad illa: *Tantum in te est Deus.*” —Corn. & Lapide.

² “Οὔτε θελήματος διαφ ράν, ἡ γνώμης, ἡ ἐνεργείας, ἡ δυνάμεως, ἡ τινὸς ἑτέρου ἢ τινὰ τὴν πραγματικὴν καὶ διόλου ἐν ἡμῖν γεννῶσι διαίρεσιν.” —Jo. Damascenus de Fide Orthod. lib. i. cap. 8.

work of human redemption—but He refers to those works, His miracles, which were the signs and tokens of His Divine power. Not *greater works* than He could, but greater works than He had done, because of man's hardness of heart—their blindness and inconsistency. For works more numerous and mighty far than any which He wrought might have been done by Him had the occasion offered. And when He promises this to His Apostles, and through them to His Church, He taught them, and teaches us, this consoling truth—that He is still present upon the earth, still working as much as when, by His corporeal presence, He was in the midst of His disciples.

Cajetan.

Theophylact.

Cyril.

Quenel.

This promise of our Blessed Lord has been fulfilled both by His immediate disciples and by the other members of His body. These have been strengthened to do *greater works*, since—

(1) To overcome Satan, the world, and the flesh, not by virtue of the hypostatic union, is a greater work than when victory is obtained by virtue of such union. It is a greater work when Christ, by His grace, overcomes, through us, the wiles of the devil, than when He did so in His own person. In this way are these words fulfilled in all His saints.

Origen.

(2) The promise may refer to the *greater works* wrought through the *shadow of Peter*, or by the *handkerchiefs* which had touched the body of Paul.

Acts v. 15 ;

xix. 12.

Chrysostom.

(3) These words, however, seem chiefly to refer to the larger conversions made after the preaching of the Apostles, as compared with the number of those who became His disciples during His life on earth—the going forth of His ministers into all the world, and the bringing in of mankind into His Church. He sowed and we reap, and the harvest is indeed greater than the seed. He bore the first conflict, and triumphed unto victory ; we manifest and extend that victory of Christ through the power which He gives us.¹

Jansen Yp.

Augustine.

Stier.

The works wrought by the hands of His disciples after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit were *greater*, more varied, as in the miracle of the tongues : they were *greater* in number, because wrought by His power working in many

¹ "Opera hæc majora interpretatur spiritualiter opera, quæ justi faciunt, reportantes victoriam contra mundum, dæmones, et carnem propriam, majusque esse virtutis et potentiæ argumentum per fragiles homines hanc victoriam Christum operari quam per Seipsum. Hæc opera majora sunt conversio tanta

quanta facta est per credentes et per discipulos. His inquit, quæ Ego feci resurgere ex mortuis corporaliter vos resurgere facietis ex mortuis spiritualiter ; Ego cæcis sensibile hoc lumen infudi, vos spiritualem lucem non videntibus dabit. Hæc Orig. : huic consentit August. tract. lxxii."—*Toletus*.

ministers whom He sent forth after His ascension ; they were *greater* in their object—not done for the lost sheep of the house of Israel alone, but for mankind at large ; they were *greater* in their effects, since they have brought about the conversion of so large a part of the world to the religion of Christ.

Lampe.

Our Blessed Lord willed that His Church should do *greater works* than He did—

(1) In order that men might be converted through their convictions, and not through the overpowering of the will.

(2) Because it behoved Him first to die, and, by His death and passion, to procure this power for men.

Corn. & Lap.

(3) Because these works were to be the signs and manifestations of the presence of the Holy Spirit. It was needful, therefore, that He should go into heaven, and that the Holy Spirit should be poured out upon men.

John xv. 5.

And yet, whilst He was promising to His disciples that they should do *greater works than these* which He had done, He points out the inferiority and subordination of those who were to do these *greater works*. He did them by His own power. *Without Me ye can do nothing* is His declaration to them ; and hence He goes on to bid them pray for that power, and to seek from *the Father* the aid needful for these *greater works*.

Hengstenberg.

Matt. vii. 7 ;
xvi. 22.

Mark xi. 24.

Luke xi. 9.

John xv. 7,

16 ; xvi.

23, 24.

James i. 5.

1 John iii.

22 ; v. 14.

Corn. & Lap.

Luca Brug.

(13) ¹ *And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

Alb. Magnus.

In My name—through My merits, through faith in Me, through My mediation between God and man. *That the Father may be glorified in the Son*: that the Father may be made glorious in the sight of men through the acts of the Son. He is so glorified when we ask in the Son's name and our requests are granted to us.

We pray in the name of Christ, that is, actually in the person of Christ, when we pray through His intercessory supplication, as if He came in and with us, and Himself prayed what we ask.² And let us note how again, in these

¹ Grotius, Griesbach, Lachmann, Knapp, Lucke, Meyer, Stier, and others place a full point after ποιήσαι in the previous verse, and read the next clause in connexion with the former and the present verse, ὅτι ἐγὼ πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα πορεύομαι καὶ ὅτι ἀναιρήσεται, κ. τ. λ. Cardinal Toletus, following the same pointing, under-

stands the clause ὅτι ἐγὼ πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα πορεύομαι to give the reason both for the fitness of the disciples to do *greater works*, and also for their receiving from the Father whatever they shall ask in the name of the Son.

² "Ὄνομα κυρίου used in application to God, and to Christ as the manifestation of God, always denotes the Divine

words, we have the declaration of the Divinity of our Blessed Lord. It were blasphemous to pray in the name of Christ unless He were God; as it would be to have prayed to the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob in the name of these patriarchs. Stier.

(14) *If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

Before, He had spoken of the Father doing what they asked; now, He says that He will answer their petitions: thus again proclaiming the oneness of operation of the Father and the Son, and their coequality. Jansen Yp.

Christ then assures His Apostles that He will be as really present with them unto the end of time, as He was when He was still with them visibly in the body, and that He will hear and answer their petitions as He had ever done whilst so with them: thus giving them another reason why they should not be troubled at His going away to the Father. Toletus.

Our Blessed Lord declared in another place that whatever His disciples asked in His name the Father would grant it; here He tells them that He Himself will answer their prayers. And yet God oftentimes does not answer the requests which we make to Him; and the reason why this is so is here shown by Christ; that is, what we ask we so often do not ask in His name, not in His strength, and as we are moved by Him;¹ but rather, as St. James tells us, *that we may consume His gifts upon our lusts*. We ask in the Saviour's name and strength when we ask after His example, when we ask for that which is needful for our spiritual advancement and our soul's salvation; since He is Jesus, that is, the Saviour, we ask in His name when we ask what pertains to Him as a Saviour; and the things for which we thus ask He ever gives us.² On the other hand, we ask often in our John xv. 16.

entity itself, in the whole compass of its properties. Accordingly, prayer in the name of Christ is such as is offered in the nature, mind, and spirit of Christ."—*Olshausen*.

¹ "In nomine meo, idest in virtute nominis mei . . . Qui petit aliquid pertinens ad salutem petit in nomine Christi."—*Th. Aquinas*.

² "Quodcunque petimus adversus utilitatem salutis, non petimus in nomine Salvatoris. Et tamen Ipse Salvator est, non solum quando facit quod petimus, verum etiam quando non facit: quoniam quod videt peti contra salu-

tem, non faciendo potius se exhibet Salvatore."—*Augustine*.

"The prayer of Gethsemane, *If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done*, should teach what prayer in the name and spirit of Christ means. We commonly attach to our prayers 'through Jesus Christ our Lord.' We do not always bear in mind that this implies an absolute self-sacrifice, and is a prayer that our very prayers may not be answered except in so far as they are in conformity with the Divine will."—*Watkins*.

James iv. 2.

Th. Aquinas.

Alex. Nat.

own strength, and for things which are injurious to the soul ; and these things Christ nowhere says that He or the Father will give us.¹ In mercy God withholds from us things which are evil. Indeed, never more does Christ show Himself a Saviour, never is His mercy and love to man more manifest, than when He denies that which is hurtful to us, though we anxiously desire it and have earnestly prayed for it.

1 "If we would not be denied, we must always remember it is the throne of grace we come to, and that which we are to ask is for grace to help in time

of need. If we keep to that we need not fear but that we shall receive a gracious answer."—*Stillingfleet*, Sermon on Heb. vi. 20.

* * * "O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only wise, invisible God, who canst not be seen on earth, and wilt be seen in heaven, let me see by my faith what I cannot in my flesh. Believingly let me behold Thee in the image of Thy Son, and favourably look on me in the face of Thy Christ. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. None but pure hearts can behold Thee;

I am not pure from it, life or heart; but washed in the Blood of the Lamb without spot, and purified by the grace of the Spirit without guile, I shall be clean. So, Lord, wash me, so behold me, so accept me; for His sake, who was Thy holy, harmless, and undefiled One, and Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."—*Dean Brough*.

ST. BARNABAS THE APOSTLE.

ST. JOHN XV. 12—16.

(12) *This is My commandment,¹ That ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

John xiii. 34.
Ephes. v. 2.
1 Thess. iv. 9.
1 Pet. iv. 8.
1 John iii. 11,
16; iv. 21.

OUR Blessed Lord had before spoken of this commandment as *new*; now He speaks of it as specially His own—as *My* commandment. By this repetition and the emphasis on these words, characterising it at one time as *new* and then as His special commandment, He would enhance our regard and call our attention to it the more, and engrave indelibly in our hearts the obligations of Christian charity. He named it a *new* commandment, because it calls us out of the old ways of selfishness and sin, for it was, indeed, *new* to those who had so long disregarded it as almost to have forgotten His words. He calls it also His commandment—*My*, in order that we may not think it may be overlooked and despised. It is the commandment which is to distinguish all His disciples. It was His commandment, since He gave it to man. It was His, since He commended it especially to us. It was His, since it was to be the badge of all His members; and in it Christ bade them, and still bids us, *love one another*—not merely to assist and do good works to each other, not to comfort by words only, but in our inmost heart to *love the brethren*. It was His, because He produces it in the mind of the members of His body, through the communication of His life to them.²

John xiii. 34.

Ecumenius.

Augustine.

Emman. Sa.

Ferns.

Olshausen.

¹ “*Præceptum meum*, ἡ ἐντολή, cum articulo; illud præceptum novum de dilectione, de quo supra, cxiii. 34.”—*Menochius*. ἡ ἐντολή ἡ ἐμὴ.—“In Græco geminus est articulus, ut sit sensus, Inter omnia mandata Mea quæ vobis servanda injunxi, hoc est illud præcipuum et insigne, ut diligatis invicem sicut Ego—id est, eo modo quo

vos dilexi.”—*Toletus*. “This is *Mine own* commandment.”—*Æthiopic Version*.

² “Cum sint alia præcepta Domini in sacro eloquio, quæritur quare solum observationem caritatis dicit esse præceptum suum. Ad quod, secundum Gregorium, dicendum est, quod caritas est radix et finis omnium virtutum.

Bruno
Astensis.
Rom. xiii. 10.

Luca Brug.

Salmeron.

Toletus.

Though, then, the precepts of God are many ; though the members of Christ have many commandments which they must keep if they indeed love Him who gave His life for them, that true Vine, of whom they are the branches ; and though our Blessed Lord had just bidden His Apostles keep not one merely, but all His commandments, yet He now speaks but of one, since all may be summed up under this one commandment, for *love is the fulfilment of the law.*¹ It is not His in such a sense as that others are not His, and therefore not necessary for men to obey ; but rather it is His because it is in accordance with His nature of love ; because He commands it ; because He inculcates it above all others. And this, the new commandment of Christ, is one and yet many—one as to its root, which is love ; many as to its fruits, which are all the commandments of God. It is the principle and source from which the virtues proceed ; for he who fulfils this one command fulfils in this one all others, since he who loves his neighbour will do him no injury, will not steal that which belongs to his brother, will not bear false witness against him ; but loving him will, in so doing, keep unbroken all the commandments which Christ has left to man.²

This commandment, then, is especially the commandment of our Saviour, since—

(1) He Himself fulfilled it, and thereby gave to all His members the power likewise to fulfil it. It was His love for the brethren—for mankind, who became His brethren by the act of incarnation—which led Him to come into this world.

Alb. Magnua.

(2) It is His commandment, since He affords us the most perfect example of obedience in this respect, and teaches us how we are to manifest our love one for another.

(3) It is His commandment, since it extends to all men because they are His brethren, knit together into one body, and made members of one Lord, through the incarnation of

Radix quidem, quia ex caritate confirmata in corde hominis movetur homo ad implenda omnia alia præcepta [Rom. xiii. 8], *Qui diligit proximum, legem implevit.* Finis autem est, quia omnia præcepta ad ipsam ordinantur, et in sola caritate solidantur [1 Tim. i. 5], *Finis præcepta est caritas.* — *Th. Aquinas.*

¹ “Unum est sub quo omnia continentur, et quia Ipse Verbum est abbreviatum, qui ut Deus summè nobis est

proximus, et interior nobis, quam ipsi simus nobis ipsis ; qua homo verò, est Samaritanus, redemptor, et medicus in quo gradu nullus est tam propinquus.” — *Salmeron.*

² “Qui proximum diligit propter Deum et Deum absque dubio diligit. Qui etiam proximum diligit non furatur quæ ejus sunt : non occidit : non ea denique facit quæ proximorum dilectioni repugnent : radix enim omnium mandatorum charitas est.” — *Toletus.*

Christ. By this mystery He united all mankind to Him, Salmeron. and because of this He bids us love one another.

(4) This love for man, by which we may keep this commandment, is the first-fruits of that Spirit which, at His going away, Christ promised to send to His disciples and to the whole of the Church: for *the fruit of the Spirit is* Alex. Nat. Gal. v. 22. *emphatically love.*

And this commandment, and the extent to which it reaches, our Blessed Lord taught us by His own example. In these words He commands us nothing which He had not Himself before done, and in telling us to do this He does but tell us to follow in His footsteps. This love for others, then, is Maldonatus. to be the imitation of His example, and must flow from that grace which we have because of all His acts of obedience. As the oil which flowed from the head of Aaron went down to the skirt of his clothing, so that love which we are enabled Ps. cxxxiii. 2. to manifest—the oil of grace which we have—we derive from our Head and great High Priest, whose merits extend to the very skirts of His clothing—to us the meanest of His Lampe. members.

We are to *love one another* not for our own mutual delight and satisfaction only, but as Christ has loved us¹—for the sake of our brethren, not for our own; denying ourselves for others, sacrificing our own will for them; humbling ourselves for their good, even as Christ did for all mankind; active for their good, in order that they with us and we with them may partake of all the blessings of that salvation which Christ has procured for us, so that all may share with us in the happiness and the glory of God's presence;² and in all things doing the will of His Father from whom He Jansen Yp. came into the world.³

Our Blessed Lord bids us *love one another* for these reasons—

(1) Because we are bound to obey Him; and it is He who calls us to this love, and who has given us this as His commandment, *Love one another.*

¹ “*Sicut dilexi vos*—id est, gratuito et sancto et affectuoso amore—non sicut homines invicem se diligunt, vel naturaliter, vel carnaliter, vel vocaliter.”—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

² “*Sicut dilexi vos* gratuite, quia prior dilexi recte; et ordinate, quia dilexi in ultimum finem in beatitudinem; et efficaciter, quia animam Meam pro vobis posui.”—*Lyra.*

³ “Hic manifestat per exemplum quomodo proximum debeamus diligere,

ita scilicet quomodo Christus dilexit nos. Christus autem dilexit vos ordinate et efficaciter. Ordinate quidem, quia nil in nobis dilexit nisi Deum et in ordine ad Ipsum. Efficaciter autem, quia intantum dilexit ut semetipsum pro nobis traderet [Eph. v. 2]. Nos ergo debemus proximos diligere, scilicet sanctè ad bonum, et efficaciter scilicet ut dilectionem opere ostendamus.”—*Th. Aquinas.*

(2) By reason of the Divine friendship which He showed to man in manifesting Himself the Friend of all those for whom He died, a love and friendship which He would have us show to all others, loving them as He loves both us and them.

Gorranus. (3) By reason of that eternal reward which awaits us, and which He has procured for us through His great love to man—that your fruit should remain.

Alb. Magnus. Love to others is the one great commandment—the new and special commandment of Christ—since it is the root from which obedience to all other commandments must spring. It is this which gives all our acts of obedience their vitality and value: it is this which perfects our obedience to all the other commandments of our Saviour.

John x. 11.
Rom. v. 6—8.
Ephes. v. 2.
1 John iii. 16. (13) *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

Œcumenius. The perfect freedom, the voluntary nature of our Blessed Lord's sacrifice, is expressed in the words which He here uses. He came to *lay down His life* of His own will, not compelled by the rage of the Jewish people, and the treason of Judas, not from any powerlessness on His part to avert the fury of the priests and rulers of the people, not forced by one who was superior to Himself—for He is equal with the Father—but He came willingly, and through His great love to us, to *lay down His life for His friends*; and that He might remove troubles from the hearts of His disciples, He shows them that His love for them was the cause of His leaving the world at this time.¹

Menochius. He comforts them, and through them He comforts us also, with these words. He tells them that, among all the offices of love and friendship, none is greater than this, that a man should give up his life for his friends, and that He is about to do this for them, thus demonstrating the greatness of the love which He has for them.² It was not, let us bear in mind, because we were the friends of Christ that He came and laid down His life for us, but rather, because He came and laid down His life for man He made us thereby able to be friends of God. Not, that is, by our own merits were we already friends, but by His grace, and by the merits of His all-sufficient sacrifice.

Rupertus.

¹ “Δείκνυσι δὲ ὅτι ἡ ἀναχώρησις αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἦν μίσους, ἀλλ’ ἀγάπης.” —Ammonius.

² “Pro iis quos amat, tametsi inimicis et hostili animo erga se affectis. . . .

Amicos vocat, non eos qui diligunt, sed qui diliguntur, etiamsi sint inimici. Unde et Judam amicum vocat, quia multa amoris signa ei exhibuerat.” —Estius.

He came upon earth, having laid down His life of glory, and submitted to the weakness of human nature, and then laid down that human life which He had taken for our sakes, thus giving the seal to His one commandment, and proving His great love for us.¹

But it may be asked, Is there not a greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends? Was not the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of man, for the godly and the ungodly, for the disobedient as well as for the obedient, the manifestation of a greater love than even this? This question, however, natural as it is, is one which has no place here. In the truest of all senses, Christ did not die for His enemies, for in that He died for those who were at enmity with Him² He showed that He loved them, that He was indeed their friend, and that He regarded them as His friends, even though they rejected Him, and were at enmity with Him by reason of their evil hearts. He calls even sinners, whom He desires to save, His friends, because He is indeed the friend of all sinners. And He died for sinners because, in the infinitude of His love, He looked upon them as friends.

Maldonatus.

Stier.

Lücke.

Let every member of Christ's body bear in mind that all temporal inconveniences, all losses, and evil, are to be endured for the sake of his brother, and that this is to extend, if need be, even to the laying down of his mortal life for the salvation of others. This was the love which of old sustained the martyrs for the truth. We are not, let us remember, bidden to risk and suffer spiritual loss, still less to sin, and to lose our spiritual life, for the sake of others. Our Blessed Lord is here speaking solely of temporal loss and of our mortal life. *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us : and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Barradius.

1 John III. 16.

When, then, our Saviour, who had come to die for those who were alienated from Him by their evil lives, and consequently by their enmity to Him, says that He is about to *lay down His life for His friends*, He teaches us that, by loving others, we are able to gain our enemies, and that those who

¹ "Voilà pourquoi Jésus a voulu mourir, pourquoi sa mort étoit, en quelque façon, nécessaire. Il falloit que le précepte de l'amour fût confirmé par le plus grand acte d'amour."—*Le Menais*.

² "Nemo pro inimico animam suam ponit, nam eo ipso, quod ponit, eum diligit; sed dicitur Christus animam

Suam pro inimicis Suis posuisse, quia pro iis posuit qui, quamvis Ipse eos diligeret, ipsi tamen Eum non diligebant. Ergo pro iis posuit qui et amici et inimici erant: amici, quemadmodum hic Ipse vocat, quia ab Eo diligebantur; inimici, quemadmodum illic vocat Divus Paulus, quia ipsum non diligebant."—*Maldonatus*.

Gregory. persecute us shall, through the love which we feel and manifest towards them, be converted into friends.

Matt. xii. 50.
John xiv. 15,
23. (14) *Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

Hugo de S.
Charo
Barradius. That is, ye show yourselves My friends by keeping My commandments;¹ or, ye continue to be My friends by keeping those commandments which I have given you.

The commandments, then, which Christians, which all true disciples of Christ, will keep are—

(1) *His* commandments; those which He has enjoined, and which they will keep because of this, that He it is who has so bidden.

Lampe. (2) They are not His true friends who keep some of the commandments and neglect others, but those who *do whatsoever* He has commanded.²

Our Blessed Lord had before spoken to the Apostles of the duty of keeping His commandments—*He that hath My commandments and keepeth them* (ὁ ἔχων τὰς ἐντολάς μου καὶ τηρῶν αὐτάς), *he it is that loveth Me.* And again—*If ye keep* (τηρήσητε) *My commandments, ye shall abide in My love.* Here, as elsewhere, He varies the word, and speaks not of keeping, but of doing (ἐὰν ποιῇτε ἃ ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι), teaching us that we cannot keep the commandments of Christ except by doing. Active deeds of love and obedience are what He looks for, what He requires from man.

Gen. xviii. 17.
John xvii. 26.
Acts xx. 27.
Ephes. i. 9;
iii. 5.
Col. i. 26. (15) *Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you.*

Cajetan. That is, I call you not merely servants, but servants who are friends.³ But when our Blessed Lord speaks of calling,

¹ “*Vos amici mei estis, si feceritis quæ ego præcipio vobis.* Sed sciendum, quod mandatorum observatio non est divinæ amicitiae causa, sed signum: scilicet et quod Deus diligat nos, et quod nos diligamus Eum [Sapient. vi. 19; 1 Joan. ii. 4].”—*Th. Aquinas.*

² “*Nota quod ponuntur tria signa dilectionis. Primum est animæ dispositio: Majorem hac dilectionem habet nemo, quam ut animam suam ponat, &c.* Secundum præceptorum observatio: *Vos amici estis si feceritis quæ Ego præcipio vobis.* Tertium est secretorum

Domini participatio: *Vos autem dixi amicos, quia omnia, &c.* Primum est in patientia et sustinentia malorum, etiam mortis, pro amico. Secundum est in operatione bonorum. Tertium est in receptione spiritualium consolationum.”—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

³ “*Amplius non dicam vos servos.* Jam notandum Dominum non asserere eos non esse servos sed, volens Suam erga illos insinuare dignationem, dicit Se deinceps non vocaturum eos servos.”—*Jansen. Gandavensis.*

He means not merely to impose a name, but that He makes those who obey the call what the name itself implies. *I have called you friends*—that is, I have made you to be friends, and given you power to keep My commandments, which is the sign of your love to Me. Menochius.

*All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known*¹ unto you—that is, all My Father's will with reference to you. He says not 'all things which I have known or have seen'—for these are infinite, and of them the creature is not capable of receiving the full knowledge—but all things which He had *heard*, all things which, as the True Vine, as Man, He had received of the Father, to make known to His Apostles and to mankind—all things concerning His suffering, His resurrection, and His ascension into heaven—all things relating to the coming of the Holy Spirit, of the calling in of the Gentiles, of the general judgment, and of life eternal. It is the mark of true friendship to communicate in knowledge one with another.² As they had been made branches of the True Vine through His incarnation, as they had been made friends of God and members of Christ by His taking man's flesh, so here our Blessed Lord is speaking of those words which had been given to the Incarnate Saviour to make known unto men.³ Hammond.

(16) *Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain* [μένει⁴]: *that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.* Salmeron.

These words were spoken primarily of the Apostleship, rather than of a choice for eternal glory; for the two members of the sentence have a mutual reference. He chose them as they might have chosen Him. It was the custom of the Jewish scholars to choose their master; but His Apostles had not done so to Him, but He had first called them to follow Him. Our Blessed Lord seems here to be still pointing back to the parable of the vine and the branches which He had just unfolded to the Apostles. As it is the vine-dresser who chooses the branches in order to John vi. 70; xiii. 18. 1 John iv. 4, 19. Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15. Col. i. 6.

¹ "Nota, feci, pro 'faciam,' ut Aug. legit, Epis. lvii."—*Mariana*.

² "Verum amicitie signum est quod amicus amico suo cordis secreta revelat."—*Th. Aquinas*.

³ "Omnia quæ audiui. Ego homo ad opus hominum—id est, omnia neces-

saria—vobis solet etiam sic exponi."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

⁴ Μένει.—See comment on verse 11 at the end of the Gospel for St. Mark's Day (*Commentary on Gospels*, vol. iii. pp. 308).

graft them into the vine, so had Christ called and selected these twelve, that He might make them living branches of Himself, the True Vine.

Chrysostom.

But though these words of Christ have their primary application to the Apostles and immediate followers of Christ, yet are they true of all those who are grafted into Him. He sought out the whole race of Adam when, as withered branches separate from the source of life, they were perishing utterly. His love for man preceded, as it ever must, the love of man to God, since it is by the love of Christ that men are drawn to the Source of love, and experience any of that love which can only come from the central Fountain of love. Had Christ, then, not sought, called, and chosen us, we should never have turned to Him.

Ferus.

Barradius.

And He calls them in order that they might *bring forth fruit*; not merely, that is, that they should go forth and by their labours and the grace and blessing which was to follow upon their teaching should bring many into the fold of Christ, but rather—as the word, and the whole parable to which these words refer, imply—that by the might of Christ's indwelling, in virtue of their incorporation into Christ, the true and living Vine, they should manifest in their lives the *fruit of the Spirit*—the evidence of the sanctifying Spirit which had been given to them, and which dwells in them. And He encourages them to perseverance in holiness by reminding them that such fruit should not fall away, but remaining incorrupt here, it *should remain*—should endure throughout eternity.¹

Menochius.

Gal. v. 22.

Stier.

Menochius.

In these words, then, our Blessed Lord comforted His Apostles—

Euthymius.

(1) By showing them the greatness of His love for them. He had called them especially to be His *friends*. Passing by the mighty, the noble, the learned of this world, He had chosen them the weak things of the world to know His truth and to be the witnesses of His deeds of love and of Almighty power.

John i. 13.

Cyril.

(2) By showing them the dignity of that Apostleship which He had given into their hands, and to which He Himself had chosen and had called them. Telling them that their mission to go into all the world and to call others into His fold came not from men, *nor of the will of the flesh*, but from Him who, of His own will, had called them to this great work.

(3) But these are not words of comfort merely—they are

¹ “Καὶ ὁ καρπὸς ὑμῶν μένει. Εἰ δὲ ὁ καρπὸς μένει, πολλῷ μᾶλλον ὑμεῖς.”—S. Chrysostom.

words of warning and lessons of humility to every member of His Church, but especially to its ministers. Our Blessed Lord here teaches His Apostles that it was not because of anything in themselves that they were so selected from the rest of mankind and called to be His ministers—that it was not through any merit of theirs, but of His own will and free grace, that they had been commissioned to this office. Corn. à Lap.

That¹ whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you. Here He points out to them the source of that Divine grace which they needed, and without which they could bring forth no fruit, and He bids them ask that they may receive this power from the Giver of all good. And all was to be asked in His name, invoking Him, and seeking all they needed through His merits, that His glory might be manifested to all the world. Thus He calls upon us also to seek from Him and in His name all that He can bestow—seeking, that is, through Him all things needful for our salvation and for that of our brethren. Cnjetan.
Salmeron.

Since then, as we have seen, these words refer primarily to the Apostles of Christ, and, through them, to the ministers of His Church, let such as are called to any office or administration in His Church remember—

(1) That the call to labour as the ministers of Christ in the vineyard of God must come from Him, and not of themselves. No man may take this honour unto himself, but must wait for that election by which Christ chooses His ministers.

(2) That such as are called into the ministry of Christ's Church are not to seek honours, riches, and temporal goods, are not to be solicitous for ease and quiet, but must remember that they are called to the ministry for this one end only—to labour in His vineyard.

(3) That in these labours they are not to seek human applause—the mere leaves of the vineyard—but to endeavour to bring forth precious fruit: first in themselves, and then in the conversion of sinners from evil, the edification of souls, the increase of the Church of Christ, the glory of God.

(4) That the fruit of all labours undertaken for Christ, and done in the strength which Christ gives, and with a view to His glory only, will *remain*—will last through eternity; and Alex. Nat.

¹ “Dictio *ut* hoc loco non causam sed consequentiam effectumque significat; noluit enim dicere propterea Se eos elegisse, aut ad prædicandum mittere, ut quidquid à Patre peterent illis daret; aut propterea eos fructum afferre

debere, ut quidquid à Patre peterent obtinerent; sed fore ut si fructum afferent, nihil in nomine Suo à Patre peterent quod non obtinerent.”—*Maldonatus*.

Gal. vi. 9.

that in due time such faithful labourers in the vineyard of God *shall reap if they faint not.*

••• “ Benignissime Jesu, qui pro credentibus et credituris in Te ante tempus passionis Patrem suppliciter exorasti, rogo, Domine, Tuam clementiam et misericordiam pro illis, et pro me et pro omnibus mihi consanguinitate, affinitate, familiaritate, beneficio,

oratione, recommendatione, vel quocunque conjunctis, seu cordi meo insertis, et universaliter pro omnibus fidelibus, ut nobis gratiam in præsenti et gloriam in futuro exhibeas, et Tu qui omnium Redemptor es etiam eorum Salvatorem Te ostendas. Amen.”—*Ludolph.*

ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY.¹

ST. LUKE I. 57—80.

(57) *Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.²*

(58) *And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.*

ON this day the Church, amid the greatest rejoicings of her children, celebrates the nativity of St. John Baptist: not that nativity on which he was born to life immortal, but that on which he came from his mother's womb to endure his life of labour upon the earth. A wondrous thing is it that the Church celebrates with greater rejoicings that day on which he came to bear such vast troubles in this miserable vale of tears, rather than that on which by his holy death he was carried away from all these miseries. Especially wondrous is it since the Church does not observe the true birthday of the other saints, but according to her custom speaks of those days as their birthdays on which as victors they departed this life.

We may argue, then, that the Church celebrates this day not looking to that which was more profitable and more glorious to the saint, but to that which was of greater benefit to the world at large.

Ph. Diez in
Hom. on
this day.

¹ "Quemadmodum enim in æstivo solstitio sole recedente dies minuuntur, in hyberno verò sole redeunte crescunt; ita Joannes adventu suo veterem hominem paullatim minui debere significabat, Christus autem novum hominem crescere jam oportere demonstrabat. Hinc est illa vox ejusdem beatissimi Joannis: *Illum oportet crescere; me autem minui.* Hinc etiam, quod majus ac mirabilius est, scimus Joannem,

quem minui oportebat, capite fuisse diminutum: Christum autem oportebat crescere, in crucem sublatum, exaltatum, auctumque fuisse."—*Bellarmino.*

² "It is not without signification that the birth of the crier was completed on the day when the worldly day is waning, and that the day is waxing on the birthtide of the Lord."—*Ælfrie.*

The *full time* here referred to seems not so much to mean the time when, according to the course of nature, John should be born; the reference is rather to the completion of the time which had been predicted by the angel. It is the fulfilment of the word spoken to Zacharias by the messenger of God that is pointed at.

Toletus.

And the greatness of that *mercy* on account of which the *neighbours and cousins* or relations of Elizabeth had come to congratulate her was—

(1) That God in His *great mercy*¹ had taken away the reproach of barrenness from her, which was specially a subject of regret and reproach to Jewish mothers.

(2) That He had shown His *mercy* in giving her a child in her old age, and hence by miracle.

Luke i. 41.

(3) That He had in His *mercy* sent to her the special gift of the Holy Ghost.

Gorranus.

(4) That the child which He had given her in His *mercy* was marked out for great deeds before God, that he was selected to be the prophet of the Highest, the forerunner of the long-expected Messiah.²

In mentioning that these friends and relatives congratulated Elizabeth alone—for nothing is said of Zacharias—there seems a reference to his condition as being deaf, and, therefore, unable to hear their rejoicing.

Toletus.

Gen. xvii. 5,
15; xxi. 3,
4.

(59) *And it came to pass that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias,³ after the name of his father.*

Corn. & Lap.

Circumcision was often performed, not in the Temple, but in the house of the parents of the child, and in the presence of the friends assembled to be witnesses of this rite.⁴ Here this was evidently the case, since Elizabeth herself was

¹ “Literally *had magnified His mercy*. The verb is the same as that which opens the Magnificat, and may well be looked upon as a kind of echo of it. The phrase is essentially a Hebrew one. Comp. 1 Sam. xii. 24.” —*Plumptre*.

² “It was *mercy* that she brought forth a son; great *mercy* that she bare such a son.” —*Dean Boys*.

³ Καὶ ἐκάλουν αὐτὸ . . . Ζαχαρίαν. —*Et vocabant eum . . . Zachariam*. (*Vulg.*) “Patris Zachariæ nomen ei imponere volebant.” —*Kuinoel*. “*Vocabant*, i. e. vocari volebant.” —*Emman*.

Sd. “They were calling him, or were beginning to call him.” —*Sharpe*. The imperfect tense implies that they were on the point of naming, or were beginning to do so, not that they had done so.

⁴ “The circumcision of John seems to have been performed in the house of Zacharias, and by one of those that came: for Zacharias, being dumb, could not say the blessing which the circumciser was obliged to say (Maimon. Hilch. Mibah, cap. iii. §§ 1—3).” —*Gill*.

present, and she could not, by the law of Moses, have been in the Temple until three-and-thirty days after the birth of her son. Circumcision, according to the commandment which God had given to Abraham, was to be performed *on the eighth day* after the birth of the child—a law which was first observed in the case of Isaac, an eminent type of Christ.¹

Lev. xii. 4.
Toletus.

Gen. xxi. 4.
Bede.

After circumcision it was usual to name the child, as now in baptism; thus are we reminded that we must first receive the seal of the Lord if we are to bear the name which our Blessed Lord gives us. No man, indeed, unless he has first cast away the lusts of the flesh, and is purged from the corruption of his old sins, which is signified by the rite of circumcision, can have his name written in the book of life and be numbered amongst the saints of God.

Emman. Sa.

Chrysostom.

(60) *And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.* (61) *And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.* (62) *And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.*

It was the custom of the Jews, especially in the later periods of the nation, to give some family name to their children—a practice which is common amongst ourselves. This was the custom of earth with reference to children. John's birth, however, was supernatural. He was marked out, by the circumstances which attended his birth, as a citizen of a heavenly rather than of an earthly kingdom. It was fitting, therefore, that he should receive his name, not from his earthly parents, but from heaven; and that he should not have the name of any earthly relative, but since his birth was supernatural, not by nature, but of God's special grace, as a memorial of the mercy he should *be called John*, which signifies the gift of grace.

Corn. & Lap.

Bonaventura.
Chrysostom.

They made signs to his father. It is evident, therefore, that he was not only dumb, but that he was deaf also. In this the miraculous nature of that dumbness is evidenced, since, had it been of an ordinary character, he would not with this dumbness, especially in so short a space of time, have lost the power of hearing.²

Gorranus.

¹ "In die octavo. Hujus mystica fuit causa vel ad significandum spirituales circumcissionem à peccato quæ facta est per Christi resurrectionem octavo die, vel ad significandum generalem circumcissionem à culpa et poena

quæ fiet in octava ætate, in generali resurrectione."—Gorranus.

² "The dumbness of Zacharias the priest, upon the conception of John the Baptist, is mystical, insinuating that now the priests and prophets also should

(63) *And he asked for a writing table, and wrote saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.*

*He asked for a writing table, or tablets prepared with wax, on which he might write, and he wrote, saying, his name is John. Zacharias says nothing here in answer to their question how he would have him called; rather he seems to say, We give no name to the child, since he has already received from God the name of John.*¹

Ambrose.

This name John, signifying the grace of God, was given to the child because—

(1) He was a gift of grace to his parents, who as yet had no child; and a gift of grace to the whole world, as the forerunner of the Saviour.

Guerricus.

(2) Because of the fulness of that grace which dwelt in him from his mother's womb.

(3) Because of that dispensation of grace which was to begin with his preaching—the remission of sins, and the bestowal of Divine grace on man.

Ludolph.

(4) Because he was to be the messenger of that grace of God which was manifested in the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, when the old law, with its shadows and mere commandments, had closed, and *grace and truth* had come instead thereof in the person of Christ.²

Barradius.

John 1. 17.

And they marvelled all. Some have understood by these words that the assembled friends and neighbours were astonished that the father, Zacharias, should mention the same name which Elizabeth had just done, since the dumbness of the father would have prevented his communicating what was in his mind to the mother, and that they *marvelled* therefore at that which seemed like a special revelation to Elizabeth. But this is not likely, since Zacharias had the

Menochius.

hold their peace. So Christ Himself teacheth in the Gospel, *All the prophets and the law prophesied unto John*: but after once John had not only pointed out in his preaching, but also pointed out with his finger, the Messiah of the world, saying, *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world*; after once the Centre of the prophets and End of the law was come, it was time for priest and prophet to be silent—*He shall cause the oblation to cease* [Dan. ix. 27].—*Dean Boys.*

¹ “Nos sibi non damus, vosque cognati, more solito in aliis, nato huic nomen non imponetis: habet nomen,

tenet nomen. Frustra de huic imponendo nomine litigatis. *Joannes est nomen ejus.*”—*Hofmeister.*

² “*Isaac* nomen accepit à risu matris; *Jacob* à supplantatione fratris sui; *Esau*, quia natus est pilosus; *Cain*, quia ipse fuit possessio matris Evæ; *Noë*, quia ipse consolator mundi, diluvio mergendi, futurus erat; *Phares*, quia divisit maceriam; *Moses*, quia ex aquis fuit extractus; *Gerson*, quia peregrinus; *Joseph*, quia matri additus, &c. Sic et *Joannes* dictus à gratiâ et misericordiâ quam accepit in sui non conceptione sed visitatione B. Virginis.”—*Corn. à Lapide.*

same means of communicating to his wife the facts which the angel had declared as he had when he called for a writing table to answer the question of the company. There were other and sufficient causes for the astonishment of the friends and relatives of the parents, as, for instance, to find the parents passing by and disregarding the names borne by various members of their families and selecting one which was new to them: and also to hear from Zacharias that a name had been already given, for he says not, He shall be called John, but he is already named so—*His name is John.*¹

Toletus.

Bruno.

Euthymius.
Bonaven-
tura.

(64) *And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.*

We are not told that he opened his mouth as he spake, but *his tongue* was *loosed* by another power, not by an effort of his own will, nor as the result of any natural strength or faculty now exerted by him, but by the gift from on high: for as his dumbness was not from any natural cause, so neither was his healing from nature.

Bonaven-
tura.

In declaring that the name of the child was John, Zacharias testified to his faith in God's promises, and his obedience to the commands given by the angel. He believed, and *immediately* he spake; the tongue which had been rendered dumb because of his incredulity was loosened through faith.² So does God change our punishment when we put from us our faults and turn in true faith to Him. And in the fact that he used the restored power of speech first to praise God, we have an instance of the piety of Zacharias. It was not any temporal blessing for which he *praised God*, it was not that he had again the power of speech, it was not even that a son had been given him in his old age; he passes by these blessings from God in thankfulness for that unspeakable gift of God's love—the coming Salvation—of whom John was but the forerunner and the messenger.

Ambrose.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Barradius.

When we would pray or sing God's praise, He must first open our mouths and loosen our tongues. And when we really pray, when we truly praise Him, He has indeed opened our mouth, He has loosened our tongue, He is showing His mercy to us.³

¹ "Nomen non impono, sed impositum declaro."—*Bonaventura*.

credulitas vinxerat, fides jam solvit."—*Bede*.

² "Quia vox clamantis in deserto est nata, merito est lingua parentis soluta. Neque enim patrem à laudibus silere decebat, qui Verbi præcone sibi nato gaudebat: quippe cui labia, quæ in-

³ "In hoc facile cernes, frater, quisnam os tuum operiat. Si Deum benedicis et laudas, Deus aperit os tuum: si mentiris et juras, diabolus aperit illud et etiam si proximo detrahis

Ps. lxxx. 17;
lxxxix. 21.
Acts xi. 21.

(65) *And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judæa.* (66) *And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be?¹ And the hand of the Lord was with him.*

Corn. & Lap.

And fear came on all. When God manifests His power there arises a holy and reverential fear of His majesty amongst men. This *fear* is in no way akin to terror; it is but another name for that reverence and for that acknowledgment of the power and the greatness of God which naturally arises in the heart of man upon the sight of His marvellous works. It is the instinctive confession of the heart that such are none other than the work and the manifestation of the power of God.

Luke ix. 44.

Deut. xxii.
46.

Toletus.

1 Kings x.
24.

Ps. xxxvii.
31.

To lay to heart is a Hebrew phrase constantly occurring in Holy Scripture, and meaning to ponder over, to meditate upon, to retain some truths, some teaching, or acts of mercy in the heart, so as not to forget them when the truths have been declared, or the facts have passed by. In the same way, to put into or to *sink down into the ears*, means to fix some truth firmly in the memory; or, again, to *put into the heart* is to engrave something on the heart, to fasten it on the memory in such a way that it may bear practical fruits. As in such passages as these: *All the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.* And again: *The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.*

The hand of the Lord was with him. That is, the wonderful power of God, His providence and protecting care, His grace, were all manifested in the life of this child from the first, showing that he was marked out by God for some special office. This was evidenced—

(1) By God having given by miracle a child to Elizabeth in her old age after her long barrenness.

(2) By the fact that the announcement that he should be born was made to Zacharias by an angel from God.

(3) By the sudden and miraculous deafness and dumbness of the father, which was *immediately* and as miraculously

et efficit ut tot strages facias.”—*Ph. Diez.*

¹ “Erit vox ante Verbum, præco ante Judicem, præcursor ante Messiam, annuntiator ante Salvatorem, prænuntiator ante Dominum, ostensor Agni,

demonstrator ante Christum, lucerna ardens et lucens, ne possent in tenebris oberrare Judæi, et qui malitia sua oberrare et à recto tramite declinare sponte vellent malitia sua damnarentur.” — *Soarez in Lucam.*

removed when the commands of the angel were obeyed, and Zacharias had declared the child's name to be John.

(4) By God having enlightened the father to know the truth, and having filled him with the Holy Ghost to prophesy of the coming birth of the Saviour, and of the office destined to the Baptist. Corn. & Lap.

(67) *And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,* Joel II. 28.

He was before spoken of as *righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.* Luke I. 6. He had already received the gift of the Holy Spirit for the sanctification of his life and actions :¹ grace making him acceptable in the sight of God. The gift which was now given him—the Holy Ghost, by whose presence he is here said to be filled—was given him in order that he might prophesy and declare God's will with reference to this child : grace, that is, to enable him to communicate the purpose of God to others. And that he spake and prophesied by the direct impulse of the Holy Spirit is asserted lest we should attribute his song of thanksgiving to the movement of human gratitude merely, as though it arose from a heart filled with thankfulness at the unexpected mercy and favour shown to himself and because of the high office which was allotted the child.² Corn. & Lap. Luca Brug.

He prophesied. Various are the meanings which this word has in Holy Scripture. Thus it means—

(1) The singing hymns of praise, the giving public thanks to God, as when it is said of Saul : *After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines : and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them ; and they shall prophesy : and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them.* So, also, Deborah is spoken of as a *prophetess*, as it would seem, because of her song of praise at the victory of Israel over Sisera. So, again, in the early Church, a woman 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. Judges IV. 4.

¹ “Après que Zacharié a été purifié par la pénitence, et sa langue sanctifiée par un silence de neuf mois, Dieu le remplit de Son Esprit et lui donne une langue de prophète. On parle tout autrement de Dieu, quand on a été longtemps sans parler aux hommes et sans les entendre parler.”—*Quésnel*.

² “Vide quam bonus Deus et facilis

indulgere peccatis. Non solum ablata restituit, sed etiam non sperata concedit : amissam loquelam Zachariæ reddidit, et Spiritum Sanctum, spiritum propheticum eidem donavit, sicut non solum de presentibus et futuris loqui, sed etiam de futuris prophetare potuerit.”—*Hofmeister in Lucam*.

1 Tim. ii. 12.

1 Cor. xi. 5.

Exod. iv. 10.

Exod. vii. 1.

2 Pet. i. 20.

1 Cor. xii. 10 ;

xiv. 8.

Ephes. iv. 11.

2 Kings v. 26.

John iv. 16—
19.Salmeron.
Numb. xxiv.
14.Bonaven-
tura.

Maldonatus.

Exod. iii. 16 ;
iv. 31.

1 Kings i. 48.

Ps. xli. 13 ;

lxxii. 18 ;

cvi. 48 ;

cxi. 9.

Matt. i. 21.

Luke ii. 30 ;

vii. 16.

is said to prophesy, not when she declares anything to the congregation, for it was forbidden a woman *to teach*, but merely when she joins in the hymn of praise which ever made a part of the public worship of the Church. *Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head.*

(2) To prophesy means to interpret Holy Scripture. Thus, when Moses shrank from his office of declaring God's will to Pharaoh—saying, *O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since Thou hast spoken unto Thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue*—God answered, *Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.* In this sense it is used by St. Peter, when he says, *No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation*—in other words, Holy Scripture must be interpreted in its true and proper sense. In this way the word would seem to be used when prophets are spoken of in the New Testament as an order in the Church.

(3) To prophesy means sometimes the speaking by inspiration of things which are past, and which could only be known by revelation from God, as when Moses gives an account of the creation of the world, and the early history of man, or when Elisha saw what Gehazi did, and told him on his return. In this sense it is that the woman of Samaria used this word. No sooner had our Blessed Lord showed His knowledge of her past life than she said, *I perceive that Thou art a prophet.*

(4) It is used specifically in that sense to which it is now generally limited—a prediction of future events. In this way Balaam was a prophet, and his prediction of what Israel would do to Moab was a prophecy: *Come, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days.*

In three of these ways did Zacharias prophesy. By this hymn of praise to God, by the declaration of the will and mercy of the Almighty to man, and also by predicting the future: for the Redeemer of mankind, of whom he spake, was yet unknown, and the great privilege of John, that he should be the forerunner and messenger of Christ, was declared whilst the Baptist was yet an infant, and as soon as he had been born.

(68) *¹Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; ²for He hath visited and redeemed His people.*

¹ The *Benedictus* has been used as a canticle in the office of the Church at least since the days of Amalarius (A.D. 820). Some, however, think that it was so used by S. Benedict three cen-

turies earlier, and that this was the "Canticum de Evangelio" to which he refers.

² "*Benedictus.* Laude dignus, laudandus scilicet est; vel *benedictus sci-*

This song of Zacharias is divided into two parts—

(1) The first part relates to Christ: the blessings of the Incarnation, the mercy to man arising from the sufferings of the Messiah, and the salvation which has flowed to man from His resurrection. These are mercies common to the whole human race, for Christ was born and died for all mankind, and this redemption, this gift to all mankind, makes the first part of Zacharias's thanksgiving, and precedes all thought of the favour shown to himself.¹ Ph. Diez.

(2) The second part of this song recounts the special favour shown to this child, John, who had just been born, in that he should be chosen to be the forerunner of our Blessed Lord—the messenger to harbingers the approach of the Messiah. Hugo de S. Charo.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel—worthy, that is, of all praise and honour. And for this which He is now doing, for this incarnation of Christ, of which the birth of John was the message, He shall be *blessed* by mankind. He is addressed as the *God of Israel*; for though by creation and preservation He is the Lord and Governor of the whole human race, yet is He especially the *God of Israel*, since the Jews were the covenanted people of God, to whom pertained the promises made first to Abraham and to his seed, and afterwards redeclared and confirmed by the mouth of Moses. But because He is the *God of Israel*, He is so to all the faithful who partake of that faith which Abraham had, to all those who are the true Israelites of God.² Luca Brug. Corn. à Lap. Dion. Carth. Alex. Nat. Corn. à Lap.

He hath visited and redeemed, that is, hath come as a redeemer to *His people*. Our Blessed Lord was now about to visit His people as a ruler comes to his kingdom, or as a husbandman comes to his vineyard, in order to find fruit. Emman. Sà. Hugo de S. Charo.

licet sit, benedicatur, prædicetur et laudetur ab omnibus. Nos utramque expositionem jungimus, laudetur, prout dignus est, ab omnibus. Benedicit homo Deo laudando; Deus autem homini benefaciendo. Est igitur exordium à laude et gratiarum actione, quòd summum beneficium prædicet redemptionis per Christum." — *Luca Brugensis*.

¹ "Non tantum dixit, quia hunc filium mihi donavit. Et ita ad ejus imitationem primum, quod facere debetis, statim, ut manè è lecto surgitis, si possibile est, non solum gratias agere propter beneficia à Deo vobis collata, sed etiam propter ea, quæ hominibus confert." — *Ph. Diez*.

² *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel.*

"This was a form of blessing of long standing [Ps. lxxii. 18], and very likely was in use, more or less, ever since Israel was distinguished from other nations, became a body politic and was settled in the land of Canaan, in the enjoyment of peculiar privileges, both civil and religious; see other forms before it in Gen. ix. 26, and xxiv. 27, and Exod. xviii. 10. And now this was very near being antiquated and out of date; for upon the birth of Christ, the Son of God manifest in the flesh, the New Testament form of blessing runs as in 2 Cor. i. 3, Eph. i. 3, 1 Peter i. 3." — *Gill*.

He *visited* those who had put themselves far off from Him through their sins, and to whom He came as one from a far-off country. But more than this, for at His Incarnation He came not, as He shall hereafter come, to punish, but in mercy to *redeem His people*. His coming at this time was in tenderness and with loving-kindness. But we are not to suppose the word which tells us that Christ was now visiting mankind means that He was not always in this world. He is and ever has been present with His creation.¹ At this time, however, He was making men more than ever conscious of His presence by acts of mercy, enabling them to see and know of Him, and to be moved by His example through the marvel of the incarnation. He came now visiting man, not as formerly by His prophets, but in His own person—taking man's nature, amongst other reasons, in order that His visitation might be evident to man, and coming not to save them from temporal evil and distress, but that He might redeem all *His people* from the heavier bondage of their sins.

Konigsteyn.

Salmeron.

Simon de
Cassia.Toletus.
Ps. cxxx. 8.

The redemption which our Blessed Lord came to effect was of various kinds—

(1) He came to redeem man from slavery to sin and from obedience to the devil.

(2) He came to free and to redeem men from that ignorance which hindered them from knowing the way of salvation; and this He did by the light which He gave to them, even Himself, *the True Light*.

John iii. 6.

Rom. viii. 21.
Salmeron.

(3) He came to deliver man from depraved and perverse inclinations towards evil by the gift of the Spirit—for *that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*; and He hath brought to those who are indeed His servants that liberty which is the inheritance of the children of God, so that they are able to do His will.

Maldonatus.

Remigius.

His people—that is to say, the children of Israel more especially; for He came to no other people, though He came for all mankind. To others He sent His Apostles and messengers to make known His will, but to the house of Jacob He brought the knowledge of redemption in His own person. *His people*—not so much that He found them so when He visited them, as that by visiting and redeeming them He made them His. And He calls them people, not peoples, for

¹ "Ὅτι ἐπεσκέψατο καὶ ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν. "Visitare nihil est aliud quàm frequenter visere, seu sæpiùs ad videndum aliquid ire. Cùm autem Deus secundùm Suam naturam ire nequeat, cùm ubique præsens sit et semper omnia

videat, visitare dicitur metaphoricè, secundùm quosdam effectus declarantes Ejus de re visitata memoriam, quæ res, dum non viseretur, in oblivione Dei versari quodammodò videbatur." — *Salmeron*.

He came to bring together and to make that which had been long divided to be now but one body.

He hath visited and redeemed. The incarnation of Christ was the very beginning of the act of redemption which Zacharias regards in prophecy as already complete.¹ Sylvester.

There are two visitations, two comings, of our Blessed Lord constantly spoken of in Holy Scripture. They are both in the flesh, but for different ends. At His incarnation He came as the Redeemer of mankind, to heal men's infirmities, to remove their sins; at His second coming He will appear as the Judge of all the world—no longer to heal, but to take account of the sins done in the body.² Hugo de S. Charo.

(69) *And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David:* Ps. cxxxii. 17.
Ezek. xxix.
21.
Zech. i. 18.

In this is the might of God evidenced, that when the family of David was in its lowest estate, and when its power was broken and all hope at an end, then God *raised up an horn of salvation*; and David is here spoken of as *His servant*—not, that is, merely as one who worshipped and was beloved by God, but His especial servant and the king of His people. Calvin.

In Holy Scripture the *horn* is used as a symbol—

(1) Of power or strength, as the horn is the weapon by which the hart is enabled to defend itself, or to attack its enemies, as an arm is used of a man to denote his power. In this sense it is used in such passages as these:—*He hath cut off in His fierce anger all the horn of Israel*—i. e. all the strength of Israel—*He hath thrown down, and hath not pitied: and He hath caused thine enemy to rejoice over thee, He hath set up the horn of thine adversaries. The horn of Moab is cut off, and his arm is broken, saith the Lord. And again: All the horns of the wicked will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.* Lament. ii. 3.
17.
Jer. xlviii.
25.
Ps. lxxv. 10.

(2) It signifies honour, glory, and triumph—as, *I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, Lift not up*

¹ “Jam in mundum Redemptor venerat, jam carnem induerat, quâ opus redemptionis auspicabatur: nam etiam incarnatio Filii Dei, nativitas, et cetera omnia Ejus præcedentia mortem, fecerunt ad nostri redemptionem sed quæ morte demum perfecta sit.” — *Lucas Brugensis.*

² “Visitare aliquoties in Scriptura pro flagello sumitur, ut est illud: *Visitabo in virga iniquitates eorum, et in*

verberibus peccata eorum [Ps. lxxxix. 32]. Nunc autem pro visitatione maximæ consolationis accipitur, quoniam non solum visitavit sed fecit redemptionem plebis Suxæ.” — *Soares.* “Visitare dicitur Deus hominem sicut medicus ægrotum, nimirum — ut ejus infirmitates sublevet, ut miserum curet, ut benefaciat, ut dolori et tribulationi finem imponat.” — *Hofmeister in Lucam.*

Ps. lxxv. 4, 5;
lxxxix. 24;
cxii. 9.

the horn : lift not up your horn on high : speak not with a stiff neck.

Zech. i. 18,
19.
Dan. vii. 7, 8.
Rev. xiii. 1.
Hammond.

(3) From the union of these two it comes to mean regal power, the greatness and honour of a king—as, *then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw and beheld four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked unto me, What be these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.* In this sense it is used both in the prophecies of Daniel and of St. John in the Revelation. And this is the meaning in the present verse. *The Horn of salvation* is our Blessed Lord, who was of the seed of David.

Chrysostom.

Hofmeister.

Cyrl.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

By the horn, then, is meant strength, power, glory, and honour. The metaphor itself is derived from the brute creation, to which God has given horns for defence. And it is not power in the abstract merely, but royal power which is meant, the glory, majesty, and amplitude of victorious rule. Hence our Blessed Lord is represented as the Horn from the house of David, endued with royal power. Royal, for He is the offspring of David, and at the same time not only royal in worldly honour, but possessing in Himself the invincible power of God. The word in its twofold meaning points to the two natures in the person of Christ, *the Horn of salvation*, the might of Godhead appearing in *the house of David*, in the weakness of man's nature.¹

Toletus.

In saying the house of *His servant* David, there seems a special reference to the fact that David, unlike Saul, was chosen wholly by God to be the ruler of Israel. He was His minister and *servant*.

We have, then, these three benefits of the coming of Christ mentioned by Zacharias—

(1) He hath *visited* and made Himself known to His people by the act of incarnation.

(2) He hath brought redemption to them by His death upon the cross.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

(3) He hath lifted up a horn of salvation, by His resurrection manifesting Himself openly as the King and Lord of life and death.²

¹ “*Erexit autem cornu salutis in aomo David pueri Sui.* Hic locus potissimum intelligendus est de inimicis spiritualibus, de quibus triumphavit Christus in die Suæ resurrectionis. Nam Paulus inquit, *Expolians principatus et potestates traduxit confidenter palam, triumphans illos in Semetipso* [Col. ii. 15].”—*Jo. Arboreus.*

² “*Tunc erectum est cornu salutis, cum Christus in cruce elevatus est.* Quinetiam ibi Rex agnitus est scripto Pilati, quod tale erat, *Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum.* Etsi verò aut Illum Pilatus et Herodes contempserint, aut alii illuserint, alii verò in Eum blasphemarint, ibi tamen ipsa Eum natura Dominum et regem agnovit. Nam

(70) *As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began :*
 (71) *That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ;*

Ps. lxxii. 12.
 Jer. xxiii. 5,
 6; xxx. 10.
 Dan. ix. 24.
 Acts iii. 21.
 Rom. i. 2.

All the Scriptures of the Old Testament abound in prophecies of the coming of the Messiah. And not only do we there find direct and verbal prophecies, but the old saints and patriarchs from Adam, by their deeds and by their lives, bear testimony to that Redeemer whom all mankind expected. All prophesied of Him.¹ Even men by their evil deeds, and the whole creation of God which groaned and travailed, waiting for the redemption which was to come, declared the need of a deliverer. But here the words of Zacharias are limited to the true and authorized prophets of God as distinguished from all false pretenders: hence, he says *the holy prophets*—that is, the prophets of God; for *all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days: yea, to Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins; and hence our Blessed Lord removed the ignorance and unbelief of His disciples when, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

Bede.

Rom. viii. 22.

Toletus.

Acts iii. 24.

Acts x. 43.

Luke xxiv.
27.

By thus citing the authority of the Old Testament prophets, our Blessed Lord showed that He who fulfilled by the New Testament what was promised in the Old Testament was the same God, whilst at the same time He ratified by His authority that which was declared in the older Scriptures.

Sylveira.

Our Blessed Lord is here held up to us as a Redeemer—as Salvation from our spiritual enemies—from those who are ever on the watch to ensnare and overcome man; and not from our spiritual foes only: He delivers us from *all* evil, not only from our enemies, who would ensnare us by their temptations, but from everything that can afflict and hurt the soul of man.² For this reason it is that He has

Toletus.

Barradius.

terra concussa est, monumenta aperta sunt, lapides collisi sunt, et multi eorum qui dormierant surrexerunt: sol autem et luna obscurati sunt, et tenebræ factæ sunt super universam terram.”
 —*Beaux Amis.*

¹ “It was a common saying among the Jews, that ‘all the prophets, all of them prophesied not but of the days

of the Messiah’ [Talm. Bab. Beracot, fol. 34, 2, and Sabbath, fol. 63, 1].”—*Gill.*

² “Liberat Dominus de manu eorum qui oderunt nos. . . . Liberat convertendo inimicos et capiendo eos in bonum ipsorum qui nos capiebant in malum. Liberat etiam conferendo virtutem, qua tormenta et mortem ipsam fortiter

become the Son of Man, a King of the lineage of David, *that we should be saved from our enemies*. For this cause has He raised up His horn of salvation and triumphed as a king over the enemies of God and man.

Euthymius.

Exod. xx. 6.
Lev. xxvi. 42.
Deut. v. 10.
Ps. xcvi. 8;
cv. 8, 9;
cvi. 45.
Ezek. xvi. 60.
Matt. x. 6;
xv. 24.
Acts iii. 25.
Rom. xi. 28.

(72) *To perform¹ the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant:*

Jana. Gand.

In the preceding words Zacharias had spoken of that which was promised by the mouth of the holy prophets who had been sent to declare the will and to make known the mercy of God; in these words He refers to that which had been spoken to the old patriarchs immediately by God, without the intervention of human agents and messengers. And here he declares the end of all God's dealings with man. *He hath visited, hath redeemed, hath raised up a horn of salvation, hath preserved us from the power and the hand of our enemies that hate us, in order to perform and to give effect to that mercy which He had of old promised to our fathers in the faith.*²

Salmeron.

The redemption which Christ procured, the sacrifice which He offered up, the resurrection, which was the exertion of His own Divine power, the whole of His mercies to mankind, were intended for all. They were not limited to those who were alive when He came upon earth; they reach beyond those who have lived after His incarnation. His mercy extended to those who had departed this life before He came upon earth, and who longed to see His day and to share in the blessings of His incarnation. His love contemplated not only the old patriarchs, who awaited His coming, and who trusted in Him for redemption; but also all faithful souls, all the holy dead, for whom, as well as for those who

Theophylact.

Dion. Carth.

Toletus.

perferendo, vitam promeremur æternam."—Salmeron.

¹ "Ποιῆσαι—as performing the mercy promised."—Bengel. "*Ad faciendum misericordiam cum patribus nostris, et memorari testamenti Sui Sancti*. [Vulgate.] Græcè: *facere misericordiam cum patribus nostris, et recordari, &c.* Aut utrobique retinendus erat in versione infinitivus, aut utrobique vertendum, ad faciendam misericordiam, ad recordandum testamenti."—Estius.

² *To perform the mercy*. "The verse has been thought, and with apparent reason, to contain a reference, after the

manner of the ancient prophets [comp. Isa. viii. 3; Mic. i. 10—15], to the name of the speaker, of his wife, and of his child. In 'performing mercy' we find an allusion to John or Jochanan [= 'the Lord be merciful']; in 'remembering His holy covenant' to the name Zacharias [= 'whom Jehovah remembers']; in the 'oath' of verse 73 to that of Elizabeth or Elisheba [= 'the oath of my God']. The play upon the words would, of course, be obvious in the original Hebrew [*i. e.* Aramaic] of the hymn, which we have only in its Greek version."—P. unipre.

should come after His incarnation, Christ opened the gates of heaven.

(73) *The oath which He swore to our father Abraham.*

Gen. xii. 3;
xvii. 4;
xxii. 16, 17.
Ps. cv. 9.
Jer. xxxi. 33.
Heb. vi. 18.

That is, Christ came to perform the mercy which, by an oath, God had promised of old to Abraham and to the fathers of the Jewish nation. Here, then, we have the causes for which God has given to mankind His only-begotten Son, has lifted up His horn of salvation, and has sent the Eternal Word to take to Himself our flesh. This was—

(1) That He might perform the mercy promised of old.

(2) Because He was mindful of the oath which He had sworn, and of the covenant which He had made with Abraham¹—*By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;* which promises were fulfilled by the coming of Christ, the seed of Abraham after the flesh, and by the increase of the Church.

Gen. xxii. 16.
—18.
Gal. iii. 8, 9,
16, 18.
Corn. & Lap.

(74) *That He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies might serve Him without fear,*²

Gen. xxii. 17.
Lev. xxv. 18.
Deut. xii. 10.
Jer. xxiii. 6.
Rom. vi. 18,
22; viii. 21.
Heb. ii. 15;
ix. 14.

The mercies here assured to us, in conformity to the promises of God, are—

(1) That He would save us from the hands of our enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

¹ “God does not swear [in the sense that man is said to swear], but He indicates the certainty of the events; that that which He says will necessarily come to pass. For God’s oath is His own word, fully persuading those that hear, and giving each one the conviction that that which He promised and said will surely come to pass.”—*S. Cyril of Alexandria on St. Luke.*

² τοῦ δοῦναι ἡμῖν ἀφόβως ἐκ χειρὸς ἐχθρῶν ρυσθῆντας λατρεύειν αὐτῷ. “He specifies two parts of the oath: 1. Deliverance or safety from the power of our enemies, sin and Satan, in these words, that we being delivered without

fear [for so the pointing of the Greek words in the most ancient copies teach us to read], that is, without danger, safe and secure, out of the hand of our enemies. 2. Giving of power or strength to us to enable us to serve Him, so as He will accept of, and to persevere in that service, in the rest of the words, that He would grant [or, as the word is rendered Rev. xi. 3, *give power*] unto us that we might serve Him [or, to serve Him] in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.”—*Hammond in Pract. Catech.*, lib. i. § 1

(2) That He would give us the power of loving and serving Himself, our Maker; for He delivers us from our spiritual enemies, not that we should be without a master, but that we should be able to serve Him.

Beaux Amis.

(3) That He would remove from us all servile fear: as St. Paul teaches us, *God be thanked that, whereas formerly ye were the servants of sin, ye have now obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you, and have been made free from sin, for ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, and can now serve Him without compulsion with the whole power of the will and with the strength of the affections, voluntarily, unconstrainedly, joyfully, as God wills, who, in all acts of service, loveth a cheerful giver.*

Toletus.

Rom. vi. 17,
18.

Rom. viii. 15.

Hofmeister.
2 Cor. ix. 7.

In redeeming us, in saving us thus from our enemies, let us remember that Christ did so for this end, that we should no longer serve the world and Satan, nor live according to the flesh, but should obey Him; and in order that we might be able to do so He removes fear from us, which is a prerequisite, enabling us to serve Him with filial love. This deliverance the Jews understood to be from the political enemies of their nation. We know that it was a promise of deliverance from spiritual foes.¹

Theophylact.

Sylveira.

Manifold are the forms of fear from which Christ delivers those who are really grafted into Him, and who draw their love from Him. He takes from them—

(1) The fear of death and of the suffering and evils of this present life. He deprives all these of their power by giving us the assurance of the resurrection, the hope of eternal life, and the consciousness and deep joy which His presence brings with it.

(2) The fear of man and of this evil world. This He takes from us by the assurance of His being ever with us and by the remembrance that this life is not the end of our being, that this world is not our home, but that there is laid up in heaven a crown of immortal glory for those who love and serve God.

2 Tim. iv. 8.

(3) The fear of sin, despair on account of our past sins. This He takes from us by the declaration that He *forgiveth all our iniquities.*

Ps. ciii. 3.

¹ “Ἀφ’ὅβως, sine metu, hostibus omnibus liberati. Prophetæ sæpe tempora Messiae ita descripserunt, ut dicerent, nullos tum Israelitis metuendos fore hostes, sed eos, pacatis rebus, liberime exercituros esse religionem; imo omnes nationes Hierosolyma venturas, et una cum Judæis Deum adoraturas

esse. Hæc vaticinia obscura erant Judæis ante eventum. Nos autem, historia et ipso eventu edocti, scimus sub illis imaginibus latuisse illud, ceteras gentes eadem cum Judæis usuras esse religionem, non tantum in Palæstina, sed etiam in omni terrarum orbe.”—*Rosenmüller.*

(4) Servile fear—the obedience which springs from fear and not from love—which He takes from us in making us children of God and by giving us the assurance and the consciousness of our sonship:—*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father: that fear which is, indeed, the beginning of wisdom, but which is taken from us as we grow in grace, and is succeeded by reverential love to God; for perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment.*

Rom. viii. 15.

Ps. cxl. 10.

Prov. ix. 10.

Salmeron.

1 John iv. 18.

(5) The fear that we shall lack bread and know want in this world. For *they that fear the Lord, with reverential fear, lack nothing.* For in this as well as in reference to spiritual food and spiritual assistance we have the command, *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.*

Soarez.

Ps. xxxiv. 9.
P. B. Vers.

Ps. lv. 22.

(75) *In holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.*

Jer. xxxii. 39.

Ephes. iv. 24.

2 Thess. ii. 13.

2 Tim. i. 9.

Tit. ii. 12.

1 Pet. i. 15.

2 Pet. i. 4.

By *holiness* is meant our duty towards God; by *righteousness* our duty to our neighbour, to man in general. In other words, *holiness* implies obedience to the first table of the law, *righteousness* to the second.¹

Chrysostom.
Menochius.

Christ, then, has not redeemed us and delivered us from the hand of all our spiritual enemies in order that we may be able to serve Him merely without fear and without law, but that, being cleansed from the corruption of our nature, and being set free from captivity to Satan, we might obey Him by active deeds of sanctification and holiness, and serve our fellow-men in all righteousness. The same law runs through all God's dealings with mankind: not for ourselves only and for our own soul's sake, but for others, He has mercy on us. If He calls us from subjection to evil He calls us *to be saints*, and bids us do nothing which is unworthy of our heavenly calling; nothing which is not becoming the redeemed of the Lord, who have now been made *children of light*; nothing which is in any way defiling to the temple of God and the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit

Rom. i. 7.

Ephes. v. 8.
1 Cor. iii. 16.
Toletus.

The blessings, then, which are here promised are these:—

(1) Deliverance from the devil and from sin: freedom from that yoke of bondage which presses upon the necks of the children of disobedience.

¹ “Τοῦτο τοίνυν ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, ὦ Σώκρατες, τὸ μέρος τοῦ δικαίου εἶναι εὐσεβεῖς καὶ ὅσιον τὸ περὶ τῶν θεῶν

θεραπείαν, τὸ δὲ περὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὸ λοιπὸν εἶναι τοῦ δικαίου μέρος.”—*Plato in Euth.*

(2) Servitude to Himself, whose service is perfect freedom: the worship of the one true and living God.

(3) Love to God: that reverential fear of which He had just spoken,¹ and which is opposed to the servile fear with which the Jew was filled.

(4) That inward and true holiness which, as His children, we must have, and which consists not in mere outward ceremonies and ritual observances, but in the worship of the heart and affections.

Hofmeister. (5) That all this love, this worship, this obedience, is to be *before God*, in His sight; not with respect to man, and to be seen of men, but with the single motive of love to Him to whom all worship and obedience are due; that we are to have our hearts full of thoughts of Him, desires after Him, holiness which comes from Him, and aspirations which regard not the world, but God only.

Corn. & Lap. (6) That all this is not to be a sudden impulse, not the observance of a day merely, not a worship of God occasionally, but continuously and perseveringly, for we are to be *before Him all the days of our life.*²

Mal. iii. 1;
iv. 5.
Matt. xi. 10.
Luke i. 17.

(76) *And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways;*

Gorranus.

Here Zacharias turns from the subject of the Incarnate God, who was to be the Redeemer of His people, to speak of that child who had just been born, and who was to be the forerunner and messenger of the Saviour—going before our Blessed Lord at this time by his birth, and hereafter by his preaching and death. The metaphor, *before the face of the Lord*, is taken from the custom of kings, who in their progresses through their dominions are preceded by their messenger or minister. As these did, so did John the minister of Christ *go before Him to prepare His way.*

Chrysostom.

And thou. The particle *and* links this prediction respecting John with what had just gone before: *thou shalt not*

¹ "Videtur tacitè Evangelium Legi opponi, quòd Lex carnalem potius et exteriorem cultum, consistentem in sacrificiis, ceremoniis, umbris, et justitiis carnis (quomodo loquitur Apostolus, Hebr. ix. 10) videretur exegisse; Evangelium verò interiora magis requirat et veram animi justitiam." — *Luca Brugensis.*

² "Nostris diebus. Dies nostri sunt

dum vivimus, atque utinam nos peccatis nostris non faciamus alienos, genio et voluptatibus indulgentes: post mortem autem tempus Dei est; ait siquidem: *Cum accepero tempus, ego justitias judicabo.* Dies etiam judicii futuri sunt quia confecto negotio, lataque sententia planè irrevocabili immutare nihil licet." — *Salmeron.*

only serve Him as the rest of mankind are called upon to serve, but above and beyond this thou shalt be called to be His prophet, His commissioned messenger; *thou*, who art yet a *child*, shalt in due time so serve Him, that *thou shalt be called the prophet of the Highest*—shalt be the prophet of Him who is the Highest, that is, Christ; for that Christ is here meant by the Highest is evident from these words, *Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest*. Why? For this reason, because *thou shalt go before the face of the Lord*—that is, Christ—who is thus declared to be the Highest. *Before the face*—that is, immediately before, without interval—not proclaiming a Messiah to come, but declaring one already present. Toletus. Salmeron.

John was to go before Him who, though Man, was also *the Lord*. That as it is the office of certain men to go before a king in order to remove hindrances from his path, and to drive away the crowd of sordid persons out of the way, so should the Baptist go before Christ, and remove out of the way all that can offend God, by moving the hearts of men to repentance, and preparing them readily to receive the offer of salvation which Christ came to make, so that grace and freedom, the regal gifts of the King of kings, might be received by men. Corn. & Lap.

He was to prepare *His ways*. That is—

(1) The way by which Christ comes to mankind. He was the forerunner of Christ, sent to prepare His way to man.

(2) The way by which man comes to Christ—repentance; which John preached, and by which he prepared men to receive the mercies which Christ would give them.¹ Hugo de S. Charo.

The preacher of repentance is to prepare and make ready the different ways by which men of various dispositions may come to Christ. For not only are different men moved in various ways, but the approach of Christ to the soul of the individual penitent is not by one way merely: He draws near to the intellect of man by that faith with which He draws men near to Him; He draws nigh to the affections of man by that charity by means of which men abide in Him. John prepared the way of faith by his preaching, in which he was but *the voice* of Christ: he prepared the way of charity by his example, who was *a burning and a shining light*. Salmeron. Bonaventura. John v. 35.

¹ "Ait in numero multitudinis—*vias Ejus*—quoniam per dona diversa ad homines vario ac diverso modo dispositos venit, et per eadem interdum, varia tamen ratione, pro Ejus incomparabili sapientia. Et bene dixit, *parare vias*

Ejus, non parare domum; nam hæc erit in gloria, ubi domus erit et mansio præparata: namque dum hic sumus viatores nobiscum est Dominus quasi viator."—Salmeron.

Theophylact. The *ways* of God are the souls of men, where God dwells, as in His temple.

Mark i. 4.
Luke iii. 3.

(77) *To give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins.*

John the Baptist was to come—

Theophylact. (1) To give knowledge of Him who is the salvation of His people by freeing them from their sins, and pardoning their iniquities. In this way does Christ proclaim Himself very God of very God, since none can forgive sins but God only.

Jans. Gand. (2) To give knowledge of that redemption and salvation which Christ came to procure for us, and which He perfects in all those who believe in Him.

Toletus. Though the salvation which Christ came to bring men was chiefly deliverance from their spiritual enemies, yet it was not wholly so; it was a deliverance from temporal evils as well as from spiritual foes; for had the Jewish nation and the people of Jerusalem believed in Christ, had they received Him as the Messiah so long promised to them, and had they not rejected and slain the Lord of life and glory, the Roman armies would not have encamped around their city and destroyed it.¹

John i. 8.
Beaux Amis. 'This salvation of which John preached, he did not give; he did but give the knowledge of it. He could but point to Him who, by His coming, brought salvation and redemption. John was not the master; he was but the servant. He was not the light; he did but come to bear witness of the Light, and to point it out to them.

Euthymius. He was sent to give this knowledge, that salvation to man came only by the remission of his sins. He was sent to give knowledge of Him who is salvation, and to certify mankind also of the readiness of the Saviour to receive and to pardon all those who come to Him, a knowledge which must precede the communication of the forgiveness of our sins. For in vain the knowledge of the existence of God, in vain even all revelation of a salvation to come, unless with that knowledge come also the knowledge of the present and abiding mercy of God in the remission of our sins.

Hofmeister.
Numb. xxiv.
17.
Isa. xl. 1.
Zech. iii. 8;
vi. 12.
Mal. iv. 2.

(78) *Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high² hath visited us,*

¹ "Attende, non solum salutem spiritua-
lem Judæorum et æternam vitam,
sed etiam vitam et regnum temporale
posita esse in credendo in Christum.
Si enim Christum non negassent, nec
occidissent, à Romanis nunquam devas-

tati essent."—*Toletus in Lucam.*

² "Oriens est nomen, ἀνατολή; et
refertur aut ad Joannem, qui præcessit
Christum, aut ad Ipsum Christum,
qui nomine vocatur Zach. vi. 12."—
Mariana.

The *dayspring*, or morning sun, is our Blessed Lord—the star of dawn. In this name there seems a reference to the prophecy of Balaam, *There shall come a star out of Jacob*; or, again, to those words of Malachi, *Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings*. Christ, who is the Star of day, announcing the departure of the night of sin, the Sun who will illuminate the whole world, and make all rejoice in the grace which He brings, has now come to visit mankind, to kindle in their hearts the dormant fire of love, and to chase away the gloom and darkness which slavery to Satan and to sinful lusts have gathered over the soul. He is, indeed, the *dayspring from on high*, abiding still on high and in His Father's presence, yet manifesting Himself upon earth; not so leaving His Father's presence as that He is not always there, but yet shining on earth, and visiting us by taking our flesh, being incarnate in our nature.

John vi. 51;
xviii. 23.
James i. 17.
Numb. xxiv.
17.

Mal. iv. 2.

Corn. & Lap.

Severus.
Chrysostom.

And this coming of Christ into the world, the visitation of God to man, who gave this *salvation unto us who are His people*, was not through our own merits and deservings; it was the result of the compassion and the unmerited mercy of the Father towards mankind:¹ for *God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*

Toletus.

Ephes. ii. 4,
5, 8.

Mercy is here spoken of, and in other places, with reference to God's dealings with man, rather than love, though this latter is the name by which He is called, for *God is love*, because mercy is a more comprehensive term, including not only the love which moves God in His dealings with mankind, but also the great need we have of Him. To say merely that He loves us might leave in doubt whether there was not something in our nature or character in which He delighted, and which drew Him to us; but mercy shows the poverty of man's condition. Nothing which God needed in us led to the incarnation of Christ; no necessity in the nature of things drew Him towards us. This might, indeed, have seemed to be the case had the Scripture here spoken of love: it was man's want, man's wretchedness, which moved the Father, and which brought to us the Son, that they might succour us who had need.² It was only *through the*

1 John iv. 16.

¹ “Ubique prædicatur misericordia in opere redemptionis, eaque summa, quod et maxima miseria nostra declaratur et merita omnia nostra excluduntur.”—*Luca Brugensis*.

² “Dignum est consideratione cur sæpe Scriptura misericordiæ mentionem faciat in redemptione et salute nostra, cum radix et primum principium fuerit amor; misertus est enim Deus nostri,

Toletus. *tender mercy of our God that the dayspring from on high hath visited us.*

Isa. ix. 2;
xlii. 7;
xliii. 8;
xlix. 9;
lx. 1.
Matt. iv. 16.
Acts xxvi.
18.

(79) *To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Mariana. That is, *The dayspring from on high* came for this end, that He might *give light to them that sit in darkness*—not to remove any mere temporal *darkness*, however, not to disperse any material blackness; hence he adds *and in the shadow of death*, that is, He came *to give light to them* who were sitting at ease in their sins, which are the very shadow of that death which awaits the impenitent sinner.

Hofmeister.

Euthymius.

The objects for which Christ came on earth, for which God has visited us, are these—

(1) That He may deliver man from sin, and may comfort him in his affliction.

(2) That He may instruct the heart, may illuminate the intellect of man.

(3) That He may guide him and strengthen him in his daily walk on earth.

Bonaventura.

Chrysostom.

Gorranus.

Christ came *to give light to them that sit in darkness*, who, so far from making any advance in a religious life, had surrendered themselves to despair, and in their ignorance, their sin, and unbelief, were sitting still, helpless and hopeless of all deliverance. And in these words, *in darkness and in the shadow of death*,¹ a distinction may perhaps be intended. Christ came to those whose souls were clouded over with the *darkness* of ignorance, who had no true knowledge of God and of His will, and also to those who had already entered within *the shadow of death* through their active opposition to His law. For as Christ's mercies were not limited to those who were living upon the earth at the time

quia dilexit nos. Respondeo verbum misericordiæ distinctius exprimere beneficii magnitudinem: nam dilectio non indicat duo quæ in hoc opere observanda sunt. Nam primum quidem erat miseria extrema hominum, in qua positi eramus; qui enim dilectionem dicit, non semper significat miseriam dilecti; nam diligere possumus eos qui non indigent, nec miseria premuntur: at qui verbum miserendi profert, miseriam ac calamitatem indicat. Deinde, vero, verbum dilectionis non excludit semper meritum: nam diligimus aliquando qui

digni sunt ut diligantur: at misericordia magis excludit meritum, quia solam miseriam et calamitatem respicit. Atque nullum meritum in homine præcesserat quo salute dignus esset; immo multa et magna demerita, idque inter ejus misérias annumerabatur. Idcirco frequentius misericordiæ Dei mentio fit in nostra efficienda salute."—*Toletus*.

¹ "In umbra mortis sedere est à divini amoris notitia in oblivione latescere."—*Gregory Mag., Moralia*, lib. iv. c. 17.

of His incarnation, so here the universality of the redemption which He procured, and the unbounded extent of the mercy which He came to manifest, are pointed out. He came, who was the True Light, to give light to those who were already *in darkness*, and lying within *the shadow of death*; and this comprised—

(1) Those who had not only sunk to the greatest depths of ignorance through their departure from and their forgetfulness of God, but had also tasted of that utter misery which the corruption of human nature inevitably produces; those who were not only fast bound in misery, but who were *dead in trespasses and sins*, in whom the spiritual life was dead, and over whom deeds of sin had cast a thick *shadow* of death. For sin, which separates the soul from God the true Life, is the death of the soul, as the separation of the soul from the body is the death of the body.¹

Maldonatus.

Ephes. ii. 1.

Salmeron.

Dion. Carth.

(2) By those sitting *in the shadow of death* seems also to be meant those who had departed this life, it may be, in the fear and love of God before the incarnation of Christ. To these also do the benefits of His coming into this world extend; and hence we read that when He died He went down to the souls in prison, and proclaimed to them deliverance from their captivity.

Corn. & Lap.

Sin is the companion of death, and clings to it as the *shadow* clings to the body.

Theophylact.

Our Blessed Lord came that men should no longer *sit* and be at rest in the midst of their sins, hopeless of a deliverer. He came that He might call them to active deeds of holiness, and to enable them to work in His vineyard, so that by their daily walk they might draw nearer to Him who is the all-perfect pattern of purity. He, however, not only points out the way to this holiness, but He *guides our feet*—that is, our affections—in that way when, by His grace, we have already entered upon it, and He gives us as a reward that *peace* and joy which are only to be found in the *way* of His commandments.

Toletus.

In these words, then, we have three benefits of the incarnation of Christ set before us—

(1) He scatters the darkness of ignorance, of sin, and of death from the soul of man, and in their place gives Himself, who is the True Light.²

(2) He guides the heart of man, the affections, and the

¹ “Sicut spiritus non vegetat membra nisi fuerint coagmentata, sic Spiritus Sanctus non vivificat Ecclesie membra nisi concordie pace fuerint colligata.”—*Stella*.

² “Nota in laudibus matutinis canitur istud canticum de ortu luciferi, scilicet Joannis, qui prævenit Solem justitiæ.”—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

will, and all the inclinations of the spirit, towards His Father, drawing thus the whole nature of man upwards to the heavens.

(3) He gives to those who abide in Him both temporal and eternal peace.

Matt. iii. 1;
xi. 7.
Luke ii. 40,
52.

(80) *And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts¹ till the day of his showing unto Israel.*

It has been supposed that the parents of John the Baptist carried their child into the wilderness, *the desert*, before the destruction of the young children in Bethlehem, and that the forerunner of our Lord was preserved from the jealousy of Herod by the solitude amidst which he was nurtured.

As he grew in age and in stature, so also in his spirit, that so with the growth of that flesh, which is ready to be turned aside to evil, the spirit might be strong to endure and to overcome all temptation. Many, indeed, wax strong in the flesh, and in their inclinations after evil, as they grow in years; but the wrestler of God, the servant and minister who is to do the will of the Father, must be strengthened by His Spirit, that he may curb the passions and restrain the desires of the flesh.²

Origen.
Bengel.

The Baptist was early withdrawn into the wilderness. There he was instructed not by man, neither in the schools of human learning, but by God Himself.³ And this retreat from the haunts of men was by the direct appointment of God; for though his parents may have been moved by fear

Cajetan.

¹ We are reminded here, as in many other parts of Holy Scripture, that in the East it has always been customary to speak of tracts of grazing, and often of very fertile land, by the name of wilderness or desert; thus, in a modern work, we read: "Between the eastern cultivated lands of Bunnoo and the hills of the Khuttuks lies a wide undulating waste, called the Thull, or desert. It is not exactly a desert, because it furnishes vast herds with pasture every winter, but it is a wilderness to any but the savage, taught by long experience to direct his path over it by the peaks of the surrounding mountains."—*Major H. Edwardes, Year in the Punjab*, vol. i. p. 33.

² "Not in the wilderness of Judæa, where he came preaching, but either

of Ziph or Maon, which was near to Hebron [see 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 24, 25; Josh. xv. 54, 55]. He was not brought up in the schools of the prophets, nor in the academies of the Jews, nor at the feet of any of their Rabbins and doctors, that it might appear he was not taught and sent of men, but of God: nor did he dwell in any of the cities or large towns, but in deserts."—*Gill*.

³ "Les devoirs d'un prédicateur évangélique avant que de commencer son ministère sont: 1, de croître dans la piété en se nourrissant du pain de la prière; 2, de donner le temps à son zèle de se fortifier par la lecture de l'Écriture sainte et des saints Pères; 3, de demeurer dans la retraite et dans le silence, jusqu'à ce que Dieu l'en retire et l'expose au jour."—*Quesnel*.

of the consequences of Herod's jealousy, yet, without doubt, the Baptist was thus led into *the deserts* in order that the future preacher of repentance might be preserved from the ways of evil and from the fearful corruption which infected almost every one in that licentious age. There, apart from man, in solitude, and by meditation, was John fitted, even by the outward circumstances of his life, to be the preacher of that penitence by which he was to prepare the way of the Lord.¹ Corn. Lap.

In these *deserts* and amidst this solitude John remained *until* the time came when he was to be shown as the preacher of repentance unto Israel. This was when he was thirty years old, the age *until* which none were allowed to enter upon the priest's office, nor permitted to perform the duties of a teacher or prophet. Maldonatus.

¹ “Ἡμέρας ἀναδείξεως αὐτοῦ.
'Αναδείξει inter alia significat *electam*
ad aliquod officium vel dignitatem, *per-*
sonam publicè designare, renunciare,
præsentare. Plut. in Cæs.: ὕπατον
ἀναδείξας ἑαυτὸν, *quum* consulem seip-
sum designasset. 'Publico indicio sese
consulem ostendisset.' Dion. lib. liv.:
Ἀγούπτου Γάϊόν τε καὶ Λούκιον
αὐτοκράτορας ἀναδείξαντος. Sic Act.
i. 24: Ἀνάδειξον ἐκ τούτων τῶν δύο

ἕνα ὃν ἐξελέξω. *Signo aliquò publicè*
ostende alterum ex his duobus quem ad
Apostolatam elegisti. Hic ergo ἡμέρα
ἀναδείξεως est dies ille quo Joannes
officium suum aggressus est, vocans ad
pœnitentiam, Messiam jamjam præsen-
tem indicans, et baptismi sacramento
divinitus sibi injuncto, sese publicè om-
nibus nova illa ceremonia præsentans.”
—*Erasmus Schmidt.*

* * “Tua, Domine, muneribus alta-
ria cumulamus, beati Joannis Baptistæ
nativitatem celebrantes quæsumus ut
nos Tua gratia ad Eum perducas, quem
sanctus præcursor et cecinit adfuturum
et adesse monstravit, Salvatorem mundi
Jesum Christum Filium Tuum; qui
Tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus
Sancti Deus per omnia sæcula sæculo-
rum. Amen.”

“Deus, qui instituta legalia et sanc-
torum præconia prophetarum in diebus
beati Baptistæ Joannis implevisti, præ-
sta, quæsumus, ut, cessantibus signifi-
cationum figuris, Ipsa Sui manifestatione
Veritas eloquatur, Jesus Christus Filius
Tuus Dominus noster, qui Tecum vivit
et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti
Deus per omnia sæcula sæculorum.
Amen.”—*Missale Parisiense.*

ST. PETER'S DAY.

ST. MATTHEW XVI. 13—19.

Mark viii. 27.
Luke ix. 18.
Ps. viii. 4, 5.

(13) *When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?*

Chrysostom.

THIS place was at the northern extremity of Galilee, and was called Cæsarea Philippi, to distinguish it from another town named in honour of Augustus Cæsar. This latter town was situated near the Mediterranean Sea, not far from Jerusalem, and was called variously, either Cæsarea Palestinæ, Cæsarea Augusti, or, from its ancient name, Cæsarea Stratonis.¹ This town was the Roman capital of Palestine in the days of the Apostles, and the scene of many events in the early history of the Christian Church, though not connected with the recorded life and ministry of Christ.

Paulus de
Palacio.

This question was asked by our Blessed Lord, not at Jerusalem, but at *Cæsarea Philippi*, on the very confines of the Gentile tribes, in a city which was more Gentile than Jewish. There seems a significancy both in the place and time at which the question was asked: as to the place, for His mission, who was *the Son of Man, the Son of the living God*, was to be to all mankind;² as to time, for it was asked when

¹ "Philippus iste est frater Herodis, tetrarcha Ituræ et Trachonitidis regionum; qui in honorem Tiberii Cæsaris, Cæsaream Philippi quæ nunc Paneas dicitur appellavit, et est in provincia Phœnice: imitatus Herodem patrem, qui in honorem Augusti Cæsaris appellavit, Cæsaream, quæ prius turris Stratonis vocabatur, et ex nomine filiæ ejus Juliadem trans Jordanem extruxit. Ille locus est Cæsareæ Philippi, ubi Jordanis oritur ad radices Libani, et habet duos fontes, unum nomine Jor et alterum Dan; qui simul mixti Jordanis nomen efficiunt."—*Jerome*.

² This town is situate on the northern frontier of Palestine, at the foot of Mount Lebanon, and is the northernmost limit of Christ's journey. It is the Leshem of Joshua xix. 47. It was afterwards called Dan, and in the Targum of Jerusalem [in Gen. xiv. 14] it is mentioned as Dan which is Cæsarea. As the city was formerly dedicated to Pan, it was called for that reason Paneas, the Paneum or sanctuary of Pan [Plin. N. H. v. 15]. Hence Ptolemy names it Cæsarea Paniæ. This old appellation has outlived the Roman name, and the village which occupies

His earthly ministry was drawing to a close, and when by His death the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was to be broken down, and all summoned into the one fold. Hence it is that we find the Saviour immediately after this confession of St. Peter beginning to speak of His approaching sufferings and the mystery of His death. At such a time there would seem to be an obvious fitness why He should test the result of His teaching, and of the miracles wrought in the presence of His Apostles, by asking what truth all these had conveyed to the hearts of the multitude. Not that He, who knew what was in the minds of men, was ignorant of the way in which the multitudes regarded Him, nor what the confession of His own disciples would be; ¹ but He sought from their answer to confirm their faith in Him by adding His own seal to the declaration which came from the lips of Peter, that He, the *Son of Man*, was *the Christ*, and not only an anointed Messenger of the Father, but the living, life-giving *Son of the living God*.

Stier.

Dion. Carth.

And the question is significant as to the opinion of *men* in general—*Whom say the people that I am?* Not whom say the priests, who were blinded to the claims of Christ, nor whom say the Scribes and Pharisees, whose malice hardened their hearts against the reception of the truth which His words and works should have conveyed to their minds, but whom say the less prejudiced, even if ignorant, multitude? Whom more than *the Son of Man* do they say that I am? All confessed that He was a Son of man. But His question shows that there was something beyond this veil of human flesh which even those who owned His great power might not necessarily see. What He was more than a mere son of man was a subject of doubt and dispute. Most saw something more, but what it was they knew not for certain. He seems in this question to refer to the mystery of His twofold nature—the Godhead veiled in human flesh. He was *the Son*

Luke ix. 18.

Chrysostom.

Gorranus.

part of the site of the old city is called Banias. On a rocky eminence in the city stood the temple built by Herod in honour of Augustus, and the rock, it may be, was pointed at by Christ in His words, "On this rock will I build My Church." (Stanley.) Philip the Tetrarch called the city Cæsarea Philippi—Cæsarea in honour of Tiberius, and Philippi from his own name—and thus distinguished it from Cæsarea Palestinæ on the sea-coast. After the time of Christ the city was enlarged and beautified by Agrippa, and in honour of Nero

was called for a time Neroneas. The soil of the neighbourhood is of extraordinary fertility, and yields a more ample harvest than any other part of Palestine. From the rocks amid which the city was built gush forth streams, which unite and form one of the sources of the Jordan. (*Porter's Handbook, Irby and Mangles' Travels, Wilson's Land of the Bible, and Ritter's Comparative Geography of Palestine.*)

¹ "Interrogavit discipulos Suos, non discendi sed docendi gratiâ."—*Emmanuel ab Incarnatione.*

Jerome.
 כִּנְיָן

of *Man*, or, as the same truth is always expressed in the Old Testament, *the Son of Adam*. No one was ever called by this name, *the Son*, except Christ, though it might seem to be a name applicable to every descendant of the first man. Nor, again, did any one apply this name to Christ, whilst He was upon the earth, except Himself. Others, at most, called Him the Son of David, the expected Messiah who was to come from the root of Jesse. He alone speaks of Himself as the Son of Man, as the Second Adam, the new Stock from which the regenerate sons of God were to derive their new life.

Bengel.

He asked them of His person—*Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?* Before they could obey His doctrine and could comprehend the meaning of His teaching, it was needful that they should understand the mystery of the personality of the Son of Man, who united in Himself the two natures of God and man.¹

Stier.

Matt. xiv. 2.
 Luke ix. 7—
 9.

(14) *And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*

Sylveira.

Matt. xiv. 2.

Theophylact.

John i. 19.

The actions of our Blessed Lord declared Him so perfectly to be man, that, though the multitude perceived that there was something beyond their comprehension, they thought only what man it could be that had thus appeared in the person of Christ. To those who cared not to know more of His nature the Godhead was hidden by the reality of the humanity.² Herod, reproached by his conscience for the murder of John the Baptist, thought that it was he who had been raised from the dead. Others thought naturally of Elias, whose reappearance upon earth they expected would herald the coming of the Messiah Himself; hence we find that, when the mission of the Baptist was commencing, the *Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him whether he were Elias or the expected Prophet for whom all men looked. And when the Baptist denied that he was any one of these, some of the people seem to have believed that Jesus Himself was the forerunner of that Messiah who*

¹ "Quæsit, quod sciebat, ut nos doceret interrogare quod nescimus non vitam proximorum sed propriam."—*Ph. Diez.*

² "Sic Dominus Jesus in suis actionibus se veterum moribus conformabat, ut, cum homines Eum prophetam

autumarent, non novum aliquem prophetam, sed veterem suspicarentur; maximè enim alienum est à vero Deo quidquid novitatem sapit ac refert."—*Sylveira.* Vide et Tertullianum, lib. iv. contra Marcion, cap. 21.

should appear in temporal grandeur to restore the temporal prosperity of the people of God. Dion. Carth.

In this enumeration of the various opinions of the people, there seems at first sight one unaccountable omission—none are represented as saying, Thou art the Christ; though this at various periods of His mission was confessed by several. There is deep significance in this omission. However for a moment the multitude might be constrained, by the sight of some great miracle, to own that He who did such mighty works must indeed be the Christ, yet this passed away with the passing away of the miracle itself, and the fixed and rooted belief of the people seemed to have been merely that which the Apostles here declare. The marvels which distinguished His life marked Him out as being some one more than common; but in their determination not to acknowledge Him as the Messiah, they were ready to suppose that John the Baptist, Elias, or Jeremias had risen from the dead.¹ Indeed the great mass of the Jews were ready to imagine everything except that the Man of Sorrows, this ordinary common-life man, could be the prophesied Messiah. Testatus. Hence it was that few beyond our Blessed Lord's own Apostles and immediate disciples recognised in His life the real marks of that Messiahship, the true nature of which Jewish tradition and prejudices had so obscured. Though, then, many were astonished at His miracles, and were moved for a time by His teaching, so that they impulsively owned that He was indeed the Christ, yet these marks of the Messiahship were more than counteracted by the evidences of humanity to which He had stooped—His poverty and human weakness. Hence it was that, though the people were compelled to acknowledge that He was something more than an ordinary man, yet they set aside the claims which He advanced to be *the Son of God*, by supposing that at the most He might be *one of the prophets* raised again Corn. & Lap. to life.

As it was in the time of our Blessed Lord's ministry on earth, so has it ever been, so is it now. He gave then to

¹ “*Alii dixerunt Johannem Baptistam, propter eminentiam vitæ. Alii autem Heliam, propter evidentiam potentiae, quia ignem de cælo deposuit super superbos [2 Reg. i. 10, 12]. Alii vero Hieremiam, propter perfectionem misericordiae, quia populi peccata planxit [Hier. ix. 1]. Aut unum ex prophetis, scilicet Helisæum, propter excellentiam sapientiæ: habuit enim duplicem spiri-*

tum Helisæ [2 Reg. ii. 9, 10].” — Gorranus.

“*Alii Hieremiam, cujus mors in prophetia illius non legitur.*”—*Haymo.* “*Hebræi expectabant reditum Jeremiæ, ut ex Gorionide apparet. Imo quidam animam Jeremiæ renatam in Zacharia existimabant, quomodo animam Phineas in Elia.*”—*Rosenmüller in Schol.*

all men the means of knowing that He was the predicted and long-expected Messiah, the Son of God, the Very and Eternal God; the many were, however, blinded to the evidences of His Divine nature, and rejected, derided, and at length crucified Him. God gives to all men now sufficient light to enable them to see the Truth, and when men are blinded it is because they will not see, and because they harden their own hearts against the reception of that knowledge which *the wisdom of God the Father of lights* has given to all men in order to guide them to Himself.

1 Cor. i. 24.
James i. 17.
Barradius.

(15) *He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?*

Paulus
Emiss.

Chrysostom.

Jana. Gand.

Chrysostom.

Ye—Christ did not ask one, but all His Apostles, though one, Peter, answered for all—Ye who have been the witnesses of all My miracles, who have been well-nigh three years My companions, and have heard all My teaching, and, living with Me, have seen and known My whole life, *whom say ye that I am?* However mistaken the multitudes may be as to My nature, however unable they may be to pierce beyond the humanity with which I am clothed, your eyes have been opened and your hearts have received My words; *whom say ye, therefore, that I am?* Our Blessed Lord reminded His Apostles by this second question addressed specifically to themselves, that the privilege which they had so long possessed, of living near to Him, and of being taught by Him, and of witnessing all He did, required a corresponding appreciation of Him.¹ They were not in the position of the rest of the world, nor of the mass of their own nation, and so were without excuse if they merely thought of Him as the world thought. The privileges which we have through our nearness to our Lord require a corresponding advance in spiritual knowledge. For those to whom He makes His presence especially known by the tokens of His love He calls to a greater height of holiness. The Apostles of Christ were at the first, like the rest of their nation, as full of blinding prejudices as others—as narrow in spirit as the rest of their countrymen; grace, however, had given them a wider love, and their conversation with Christ had imbued

¹ “*Vos, scilicet ab aliis electi, secundum illud Joannis: Ego vos duodecim elegi; et item: Non vos Me elegistis, sed Ego elegi vos* [Joan. xv. 16]. Vel *vos, amici, secundum illud: Vos autem dixi amicos* [Joan. xv. 15]. Vel *vos, speciales discipuli, secundum illud:*

Vobis datum nosse mysterium regni Dei [Matt. xiii. 11]. *Vos, inquam, qui in Me creditis, quem Me esse dicitis—id est, confitemini—quia corde creditis ad justitiam, ore autem confessio fit ad salutem* [Rom. x. 10].”—*Bonaventura.*

them with a knowledge which raised them above other men, and in raising them above others had given them a deeper insight into Divine things.

Simon de
Cassia.

By this question, especially addressed to His Apostles, Christ teaches us—

(1) That those who are to go forth and teach the truth to others should first be assured of that truth which they are to teach; for *if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*. Of such ignorant teachers St. Paul speaks when he bids his disciple Timothy beware of those who, while *desiring to be teachers of the law, yet understand neither what they say nor whereof they affirm*.

Matt. xv. 14.

1 Tim. i. 7.

(2) That they who, through their familiarity with sacred things and their acquaintance with the mysteries of the faith, possess a deeper knowledge of the truth, should rise to a larger and truer comprehension of the nature of Christ and the solemn truths which lie under the surface of revelation.

Ferus.

It suffices not that we know of Christ in our hearts; His demand is, *What say ye of Me by your life and actions?*¹

Stella.

(15) *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

John i. 42;
vi. 69;
xi. 27.
Acts viii. 37;
ix. 20.
Heb. i. 2, 5.
1 John iv. 15;
v. 5.

Simon Peter answered—not for himself only, but he made this confession of Christ for the whole body of the Apostles; with his fervid and impetuous zeal hastening to anticipate that confession which was in the hearts of the rest of his fellow-disciples. That he only uttered what was in the mind of the rest of the Apostles of Christ is evident, since the whole of them had made the same declaration when they saw their Master's power over the winds and the waves, and *came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God*. Hence, also, this same Apostle declared, on another occasion, in the self-same words, that this was the faith of the whole twelve—*We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God*.

Jerome.
Augustine.
Ambrose.
Anselm.
Th. Aquinas.
Lyra.
Dion. Carth.
Jansen.
Theophylact.

Matt. xiv. 33.

John vi. 69.
Whitby.

Our Blessed Lord had asked who He, *the Son of Man*, was; Peter answered that He was not only *the Son of Man*, but also *the Son of the living God*.² This truth Christ confirmed,

¹ “Quærit de eo, quod de se ipso dicunt, nam prælatus (juxta Apostoli doctrinam) non solum debet bonus et sanctus esse in interiori conscientie suæ, sed etiam necesse est quod habeat bonum nomen et existimationem apud omnes exterius. Oportet illum testi-

monium habere bonum ab his, qui foris sunt. Deo debes bonam conscientiam et proximis bonum exemplum.” —
Stella.

² “Notandum quam miranda distinctione sit factum, ut cum de utraque ejusdem Domini et Salvatoris nostri

Bruno.

and declared Peter blessed through the knowledge of it. He who was *the Son of Man* according to His human nature was, at the same time, *the Son of God* in the reality of His Divine nature. And the completeness of the union between these two natures in the one person of Christ Jesus is pointed out in the pronoun *Thou*. Though God and man, though Christ and *the Son of the living God*, yet art *Thou* but one person.

Alb. Magnus.

By his confession, St. Peter declares that our Blessed Lord is—

(1) *The Christ*—not merely an anointed One, as priests, kings, and prophets of old might have been anointed, but that He was *the Christ*, the One anointed of the Father, from whom He had received this gift in a supereminent manner.

Theophylact.

(2) *The Son*—not one son merely out of many, but that He was so beyond all others, and in a way which singled Him out from them. Son and only-begotten, not by grace, but of the substance of the Father.

Th. Aquinas.

Ælfric.
Corn. & Lap.

(3) The Son of *the living God*—not of the gods of the heathen world, the objects of Gentile idolatry, men who had lived and were now dead; not the dead elements of earth which many in their ignorance bowed down to and worshipped,¹ but the Son of the One *living* and true God, who has life in Himself, who is uncreated life—the living, life-giving principle to all mankind.

Jana. Gand.

(4) That He is Christ and at the same time Son of the living God. In contradistinction to the crowd, who believed Him to be the Baptist, Elias, or one of the prophets, Peter acknowledged Him to be Christ, and *the Son of the living God*. In addition to the words of Christ Himself, who had said, *the Son of Man*, Peter confessed Him to be not only man, but also God.

This confession of St. Peter is the full confession of the two natures which were united in the one person of Christ.

natura ab Ipso Domino, et à fidei Ejus discipulo esset proferenda sententia, Dominus Ipse humilitatem assumptæ humanitatis profiteatur, discipulus excellentiam divinæ æternitatis ostendat. Dominus de Se quod minus est, discipulus de Domino intimat quod majus est; Dominus de Se quod factus est propter nos, discipulus declarat de Domino quod Ipse est qui fecit nos. Sicut et in Evangelio Dominus multo crebrius Se filium hominis quam filium Dei appellare consuevit, ut nos admo-

neret dispensationis quam pro nobis suscepit. Sed nos necesse est, tanto humiliter divinitatis Ejus alta venerari, quanto Illum meminimus pro nostra exaltatione ad humanitatis infima descendisse.”—*Rabanus Maurus*.

¹ “Sciendum quod cum dicitur Deus vivus et homo vivus de homine dicitur per participationem vitæ, sed de Deo dicitur quia fons vitæ [Ps. xxxvi. 10]. *Apud te est fons vitæ*. Et in Joan. xiv. 6, *Ego sum via, veritas, et vita*.”—*Th. Aquinas*.

The names of Christ, and of the Son of God, are not synonymous; but the Apostle rises from the assertion of the human nature in the name of Christ to that of the Divine in declaring this Christ to be the Son of the living God. Our Blessed Lord is *the Christ*, or Messiah, anointed and consecrated to His office through the hypostatic union of the Divine nature with the human.¹ It suffices not that we confess our belief in the humanity of Christ unless to this, like St. Peter, we add our faith in the Divinity. One without the other is no sure foundation of Christian hope. As prophets, priests, and kings were consecrated to their office, so was He, the great Prophet, Priest, and King of all mankind, consecrated to the office which He had freely accepted in obedience to the will of the Father. He is the one great Teacher, who reveals to man the nature of God, and makes known the Divine will. He is the *Prophet* by whom the whole mind of the Father is communicated to His Church. He is the *Priest* who, by the sacrifice of Himself upon the cross to which He was hastening, reconciled the world to the Father. He is the *King* who bears sway over the whole Church, and by His ascension into heaven, manifests Himself the Ruler of all things, whether in earth or heaven.²

Bruno
Astensis.

Gorranus.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.
Hilary.

Corn. & Lap.

In this confession there are included these truths:—

(1) That of the nature which Christ took—the human nature; this it is, which was anointed or consecrated.

(2) That of the anointing which He received, the fulness of the Holy Spirit, imparted without measure to Christ at His conception; for this is the declaration which was made by our Blessed Lord Himself—*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* Hence, also, St. Peter

Luke iv. 18,
19.

¹ “Τίνα μὲ εἶναι λέγετε; Τότε ὁ πανάριστος Πέτρος, ἡ κορυφαία τῶν ἀποστόλων ἀκρότης, οὐ γυμνὸν, οὐδ’ ἄσαρκον καταθειώμενος Λόγον, οὐδὲ ψιλὸν καὶ θεοφόρον ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ’ υἱὸν Θεοῦ καὶ Οεὸν φύσει, καὶ φύσει γεγόμενον ἄνθρωπον, καὶ ἓνα τοῦτό τε κάκεινο ὄντα Χριστὸν. Σὺ εἰ ὁ Χριστός, ἔλεγεν, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ζῶντος. Οὐκ εἶπεν, υἱός, ἀλλ’ ὁ υἱός· ὁ μονογενής, ὁ εἰς, ὁ προαιώνιος.” — *Jo. Damascenus, adv. Nestorianos, § xix.*

² “*Thou art Christ, the Son of the*

living God; a short but a very full confession of faith, containing the following articles: (1) As that there is a God; (2) that there is but one God; (3) that He is the living God, has life in Himself, is the fountain of life to others, and by this is distinguishable from the idols of the Gentiles; (4) that Jesus is the Christ, the chosen of God, the true Messiah that was promised by God, prophesied of by all the prophets from the beginning of the world, and expected by the people of God.” — *Gill.*

Acts x. 38.

declared that—*God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power.*

Ferus.

(3) That of the object of this anointing—that He might be *the Christ*, the King, the Priest, the Prophet of His people.

Paulus de Palacio.

Divers were the opinions of *men* respecting our Blessed Lord. One only is the belief of His Church, that He is *the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

Ps. lxvi. 4.
Ecclus. xiv. 18.
Matt. xi. 27;
xxiv. 22.
John i. 14.
Rom. iii. 20;
viii. 3.
Ephes. ii. 8.
1 Cor. i. 29;
ii. 10.
Gal. i. 16.
1 John iv. 15;
v. 5.
Jerome.
Chrysostom.

(17) *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven.*¹

Our Blessed Lord here names the father of Peter, as though He would say, As thou art the son of Jona—or John²—truly the son begotten of the substance of thy earthly father, so am I not the adopted nor elected Son, but begotten of the substance of the Father Almighty; the Eternal Word of the Eternal Father.

Hilary.

Theophylact.

John xvii. 8.

Jans. Gand.

Ferus.

As Peter replied for the whole body of the Apostles, so the words of Christ apply to the whole twelve; and the blessedness here spoken of is not Peter's only, but is equally the property of the rest of the Apostles of the Lord. He pronounced them *blessed* because they had received the knowledge of this great and consoling truth—*blessed* because they now knew the mystery of the Sonship of Christ—who was at once the Son of God and the Son of man; for this is true blessedness, yea, life eternal, to know Him, the true God, and to be known of Him. They were *blessed* because they confessed that Christ was the Son of the living God—*blessed* in the possession of a true faith in Him who was at once God and man.³ Thus may we know assuredly that true faith in the Saviour makes men blessed, and that they are *blessed* because of their faith in Him.⁴

¹ “Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.”—Matt. xi. 27.

² “Bar-jona dictum est per contractionem pro Bar-Johanna, quod Chaldicè filium Johannis significat, quemadmodum Jo. xxi. 15 appellatur. Simili contractione usus est Lucas [iii. 30].”—*Maldonatus*.

³ “*Beatus es, ob tuam de Me fidem, O Petre. Fides enim est basis ac initium omnis gratiæ et gloriæ, per eamque ducimur in vitam æternam.*”—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione*.

⁴ “Ἐὰν ὡς ὁ Πέτρος λέγωμεν, οὐ

σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος ἡμῖν ἀποκαλύψαντος, ἀλλὰ φωτὸς ἡμῶν τῇ καρδίᾳ ἐλάμψαντος, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς πατρὸς, καὶ αὐτοὶ γινόμεθα ὅπερ καὶ ὁ Πέτρος, ὁμοίως αὐτῷ μακαριζόμενοι, διὰ τὸ τὰ αἷτια τοῦ μακαρισμοῦ ἐκείνῳ καὶ ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς ἐφθακέναι, τῷ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα μὴ ἀποκεκαλυφέναι ἡμῖν περὶ τοῦ τὸν Ἰησοῦν εἶναι Χριστὸν, υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἐν οὐρανοῖς πατέρα, ἀπ’ αὐτῶν τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἵνα ἐν οὐρανοῖς πολιτευώμεθα, ἀποκαλύψαντος ἡμῖν ἀποκαλύψιν, ἀνάγουσαν εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς τοὺς περιαιρούντας

But Peter is here declared to be *blessed* because this truth had not been revealed to him by *flesh and blood*, but by the revelation of the Father.¹ It was not, as it could not be, made known to him by *flesh and blood*; not, that is—

(1) By carnal men, nor, indeed, by men at all, since man cannot of himself make known the things of the Spirit.²

Anselm.
Barradius.

(2) Not through mere carnal reasoning, nor from the human intellect only, for *the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God*. This truth was made known to them by the *Father*, who opened their minds and gave them power to comprehend the truth of Christ's nature, which their Lord declared, and to understand the evidence of the works which He did.

1 Cor. ii. 11.

Haymo.

(3) It was not the revelation of Christ's flesh. It was not merely that Peter had been able to pierce beyond the veil of Christ's human nature, and through that, and by means of that, to understand the Divinity, but it was the direct act of the Father by which he was enlightened. It was not in his case as with Nathanael, who, because something was told him which he thought he alone knew, and hence, by the deduction of reason, was able to exclaim, *Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel*. The blessedness of Peter and of the rest of the Apostles consisted in this, that the truth respecting Christ's Divine nature was revealed to them from on high by the Father, who alone could bear witness to the Divinity of the Saviour.³ This He did when at the baptism of Christ a voice from heaven proclaimed, *This is My beloved Son*; and this confession of St. Peter was ratified again when, *after six days*, Christ taking Peter, James, and John went up into the mountain, and was transfigured before them, and *a bright cloud overshadowed them: and . . . a voice out of the cloud . . . said, This is My beloved Son*.

Hilary, De
Carne et
Sanguine
Christi.

John i. 49.

Gorranus.

Soarez.

Matt. iii. 17.

Matt. xvii 5.

Peter, in common with the rest of the disciples of Christ, had seen His miracles, and had listened to His teaching

μεν πᾶν κάλλυμμα ἀπὸ τῆς καρύας, ἀπολαμβάντας δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς σοφίας τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τῆς ἀποκαλύψεως."—*Origen*.

¹ "Caro, inquit, et sanguis non revelavit tibi, sed Pater Meus. Hoc est lumen Christianorum. Oculus lumen est animalis, ratio hominis fides Christiani."—*Ferus*.

² "Caro et sanguis. Hoc potest exponi, ita quod caro et sanguis sumantur pro amicis carnalibus. Ad Galat.

i. 16, continuo non acquievi carni et sanguini."—*Th. Aquinas*.

³ "In navicula dixerunt, Verè Filius Dei es [Matt. xiv. 33], et tamen non sunt beatificati, non enim talem confessi sunt filiationem. Item Joan. i. 49, dixit Nathanael, Rabbi, Tu es Filius Dei, et non solum non est beatificatus sed etiam redargutus. Iste beatificatur quia propriè Eum confessus est. Et ne putes Petrum adulari, Pater traducitur revelator."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

when He spake of things which only God could make known to man, all which were so many proofs of our Blessed Lord's Divine mission and nature; yet here Christ says, not that these things had manifested Him to His Apostle, but that the Father Himself had revealed this truth to him. It was the Father who opened the heart of Peter to receive and to believe in that truth which the miracles indeed declared, but which the miracles could not implant as a living principle in the heart. It was, again, the Father who worked these very miracles, as it was the Father who opened the heart of Peter to comprehend the truth: hence Christ says to His disciples, *The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.* Others saw, indeed, the miracles of Christ, but these signs of almighty power were wholly powerless to work conviction, since many of those who had seen them yet hardened their hearts against the teaching of these miracles.

John xiv. 10.

Tostatus.

Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. Every word here is emphatic: it is the *Father* who is the Source of all light to man, the Giver of all gifts; for *every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.* My Father, since Christ, who is Light, the *Light of men*, is in a special manner the Son—the only-begotten Son—of God; *the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* And all this is from *heaven*, the region of light.

James i. 17.

John i. 4.

John i. 8.

Alb. Magnus.

Job xxxviii.
17.Ps. ix. 13;
cvii. 18.Isa. xxxviii.
10.

Wisd. xvi. 13.

Luke xxii.

31, 32.

John i. 42.

Ephes. ii. 20.

Rev. xxi. 14,
19.

(18) *And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Two interpretations, and two only, have from the first been given of this verse; and these two, in fact, are consistent with each other, and are really one.¹ Another interpretation, which has been adopted for controversial purposes, is altogether novel. The great body of the Fathers, in accordance with the analogy of Holy Scripture, understand by *this Rock* our Blessed Lord, the one only Foundation of the Church. Others speak of *this rock* as being that truth of the Divinity of our Blessed Lord which St. Peter had just confessed,² the concrete object of his

¹ See the note at the end of this day's Gospel.

² "The Lord said to Peter, 'Thou art of stone.' For this strength of his belief, and for the steadfastness of his profession, he received that name, be-

cause he had attached himself with firm mind to Christ, who is called 'stone' by the Apostle Paul: *And I will build My faith upon this stone*—that is, on the faith which thou professest. All God's Church is built on that stone—

confession, that sure foundation on whom his faith rested; an interpretation widely different from that of later times, by which some have tried to conform the words of the Fathers, and of the great commentators of the Middle Ages, to the exigencies of modern controversy, and have attempted to interpret these words of the subjective faith, the fidelity, which was in St. Peter.¹

This name, the *Rock*, was no new name for God: it is that which is used in the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms, as for instance—*Who is God save the Lord? and who is a Rock save our God? Truly my soul waiteth upon God: . . . He only is my Rock and my salvation; . . . the Rock of my strength and my refuge.* Upon this Rock, Himself, or upon that article of the faith, that He who is the Son of man is the Son also of the living God, which Peter had just confessed, did our Blessed Lord promise that His Church should be built—for *this Rock* is nothing but that impregnable and unshaken Rock on which the Church is founded, and is made so strong by resting on that foundation that it cannot fall.² That truth, then, which Peter confessed is the rock on which all true believers are to be built. For though it is needful that the Christian should have all virtues, and obey all the commandments of God, yet in vain shall we labour, in vain shall we try to be built up in our most holy calling, unless we lay the foundation in a right faith. Whether, then, we understand by the words *this rock*, the cardinal article of the common creed of all Christian people, upon which, as upon a stable and sure foundation, all other parts of the creed rest, or whether we take these words, *this Rock*, to mean that living Lord whom Peter had just confessed, these words equally declare that the Church is built upon Christ as its chief corner-stone, and that He is that founda-

2 Sam. xxii.
32.
Ps. xviii. 31.
Ps. lxi. 2, 6,
7.

Chrysostom.
Bruno.

Cyril de
Trinitate.

Theophylact.

that is, upon Christ; for He is the foundation of all the fabrics of His own Church. All God's Churches are accounted as one congregation, and that is constructed of chosen men, not of dead stones; and all the building of these living stones is founded on Christ; for we, through that belief, are accounted His limbs, and He is the Head of us all. He who builds not from that foundation, his work falls to great perdition."—*Ælfric*.

¹ "Christ does not say, upon thee, Peter, but, *upon this rock*, referring to something distinct from him."—*Gill*.

² "Hoc claret, quod Christus Eccle-

siam Suam non super Petrum aut quemcunque alium hominem ædificavit, nullus enim homo tam firmus et constans, qui non possit moveri, id quod etiam in Petro manifestè videmus: alia igitur petra inquirenda est. . . . Petra primariè Christus est, cui tota Ecclesia superædificata est. . . . Deinde quia per veram fidem Christo conjungimur, ac si quodammodo et nos petrascimus (si sic liceat loqui), et ipsa igitur fides Christiana et veritas Evangelica firma et inconcussa petra illa est super quam Christus ædificavit Ecclesiam Suam."—*Ferus*.

Dion. Carth. tion, of whom the Holy Spirit declares, *Other foundation*
 1 Cor. iii. 11. *can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*¹

Dion. Carth. *Thou art Peter.* That is, thou art a worthy confessor of
 the true Rock, which is Christ. Our Blessed Lord called
 His Apostle by this name—Peter—because he derived his
 faith not from flesh and blood, but from the Rock Himself;
 and in so naming him He promises to Peter that steadfast-
 Ambrose in ness which, after the coming of the Holy Spirit, marked his
 Lucam. character.² Because of this confession which he had just
 uttered he was named Peter; but the confession was not
 from himself, but was a revelation from God. Of Christ's
 mercy alone was it that he was to be a stone. He had not
 this strength by nature, for he was ever falling away; but
 he was called Peter because the new strength which was
 given him came from that Rock on which he was builded.
 Farus. *And that Rock was Christ.*³

Every one, then, who makes a true confession that Jesus
 is the Son of God, and has his conversation in heaven, being
 Ephes. iii. 17. *rooted and grounded* in Him, who is *love*, shall also have
 these words applied to himself, *Thou art Peter*, for every one
 is a living stone who is an imitator of Christ, the true
 Origen. Rock.⁴ Strive, then, thou who art a Christian, that thou
 also may be a Peter, a stone in Christ's Church. Seek for
 that strength not within thyself, but from without, from
 Christ. The stone that thou wouldst become must be thine
 own act, thine own mind. Upon the foundation of that true
 faith which thou hast shall thy whole manhood in Christ be
 builded, so that it shall be beaten down by no storms of
 spiritual wickedness. The stone is thy faith, as the founda-
 tion of the Church is *the* faith. If thou art firm in the faith,
 thou abidest in the Church, which is founded upon the Rock.
 If thou art thus in the Church, *the gates of hell* shall not
 prevail against thee. *The gates of hell* are the gates of
 Ambrose in death; that is, they are the sins leading thee to hell.
 Lucam.

¹ "Quomodo ædificamur super Christum? Dum credimus Eum ante omnia sæcula genitum à Patre et in fine temporum natum ex Maria Virgine, dum credimus veraciter Eum passum, resurrexisse à mortuis, ascendisse ad cœlos, et venturum ad iudicium, taliter edificamur super Christum."—*Haymo*.

² "*Beatus es*, quia Ego Petra, tu Petrus; neque enim à Petro Petra, sed à Petra Petrus; quia non à Christiano Christus, sed à Christo Christianus."—*Augustine*, Ser. cclxx.

³ "Petra viva, Christus verus Deus et homo est."—*Ph. Dicz*.

⁴ "De cœlis est revelatio, de cœlis est confessio; cœlestis est Fundator, cœlesteque Fundamentum. Et propter cœlestia capessenda hujusmodi fundatio facta est. Quod homines sumus, terrenum fundamentum habemus, quoniam ex Adam terreno carnis propagatione traducimur. Quod verò fideles sumus, super cœlestia fundamur, non super Petrum, sed supra Petram Christum, unigenitum Dei Filium, ore suo ex confessione veræ fidei revelatione Patris æterni depromptam. Petra autem erat Christus. Igitur ex terreno terreni, ex cœlesti cœlestes."—*Simon de Cassia*.

As, then, our Blessed Lord says, thou hast confessed Me to be the Christ, so do I, who am the Truth, and cannot deceive, declare thee to be Peter, and tell thee that *upon this rock*—upon the sure stability of this truth which thou hast uttered—*I will build My Church*. Christ is the one foundation of His Church,¹ as He who alone has authority. The Apostles are the twelve foundation-stones, as the administrators and rulers under Him of His Church, the stones built upon Him who is the one foundation; and the bishops of that Church now may be spoken of as in some sort foundation-stones also, since they share in that work assigned at first to the twelve Apostles of Christ. Gorranus.

That life which Christ has, those graces which He has, He communicates to those who are His. Thus He who is the *true Light*, the one essential *Light of men*, gives His Apostles light from Himself, in order that they also may be bearers of light to the whole of mankind; for so Christ Himself says, *Ye are the Light of the world*, thus making them share in His name, and partake of His office. He again says, *I am the Bread of Life*, and yet He makes all His faithful people share in this also, for *we are all one bread*. He who is *the true Vine* has yet spoken of His people in the same way, and used the same figure of them when He said, *I have planted thee a true Vine*. We are expressly told by the Holy Spirit that the spiritual Rock of which we must all drink is Christ, and yet He deigns to make His disciples share in this also, and says here to one of them, *Thou art Peter*, since He who was the *chief corner-stone* was about to build His Church *upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*. Thus it is that, in the mystic vision in which the history of the Church was unfolded to the eye of St. John, we read that *the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb*, not as though Christ was not the one only foundation, but that they were truly builded upon Him, and, through their union with Him, were worthy to be made under Him the foundation of His Church—the New Jerusalem. John I. 4, 9.
Matt. v. 14.
Jerome.
John vi. 35.
1 Cor. x. 17.
John xv. 1.
Jer. II. 21.
1 Cor. x.
Ambrose in
Lucam.
Ephes. II. 20.
Rev. xxi. 14.

¹ “*Ecce ego mittam in fundamentis Sion lapidem, lapidem probatum, angularem, pretiosum, in fundamento fundatum* (Isaiæ xxviii. 16): Deus et homo futurus erat fundamentum fundatum in Sion. P. Augustinus in Psal. lxxv. Vera Sion Ecclesia est Christianorum. . . . Ergo fundamentum positum in Sion, hoc est in Ecclesia, solus est Christus. Sed et ejusdem fundamenti lapis Christus est. Apostolus: *Petra*

autem est Christus (1 Cor. x. 4). Nec lapis tantum est, sed et lapis probatus est, angularis est, pretiosus est. Nonne probatus Christus per tribulationes adversariorum? Nonne per pietatem, per scientiam, per fortitudinem, per consilium, per intellectum, per sapientiam probatus, merito acclamatus est Filius Dei?”—*Th. d. Villanova, Concio i. in Cath. S. Petri, §§ iii., iv.*

But let us note that our Blessed Lord speaks of the Church as His—I will build *My Church*—thus acknowledging the truth of Peter's confession, and calling Himself God; for the Church of God has no other Lord, and can belong to no other, in such a way that it can be spoken of as his Church; it is the Church of God alone.¹

Theophylact.

The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The gate of a city is the place where councils are held, where the governing body meets, and is, therefore, a symbol of power. *The gates of hell* mean, then, the powers of evil, all means by which wickedness is advanced—heretics who deprave the faith, impure men who destroy the moral principles of mankind, persons of sinful lives whose examples draw men first to evil and then to hell; for the *gates* here spoken of are—

Deut. xxv. 7.
I. am. v. 14.
Ezth. iv. 2.
Paulus de
Palacio.
Wordsworth.
Bruno.
Dion. Carth.

(1) All those things which tend to hell,² whether they be man's sins, which immediately conduct thither; or the false teaching of men, by which the teaching of the Gospel is depraved and men are robbed of that *lamp unto their path* which should guide them through the mazes of this sinful world; or again, the unrestrained passions and appetites which mediate lead sinners thither. In this sense David makes his prayer to God, as *Thou that liftest me up from the gates of death*, from the double sin, that is, into which he had fallen—the murder of Uriah and his adultery with Bathsheba. In this sense, then, the gates of hell are all suggestions and temptations of the devil, all sins.

Konigsteyn.

Theophylact.

Gorranus.

Tostatus.
Haymo.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

(2) The evil powers and dominions of the world, which assault the Church, and would destroy the faith of Christ's little ones, either by open violence or by the enticements and blandishments of worldly honour and applause.

And the ways by which men depart from God are many. Because the temptations of Satan are manifold, the means by which we fall into the power of the devil, into hell, are many. Hence our Blessed Lord speaks of *gates* in the plural.³ And these, He says, shall not prevail against the

¹ "Nota quod ubique dicit in passivo, *superædificati, coædificamini*, et cætera. Quia hic signanter ait, *Ego ædificabo Ecclesiam*, non autem dicit, *Tu ædificabis*. *Neque enim qui plantat est aliquid, neque qui rigat, sed qui incrementum dat Deus*."—Konigsteyn.

² *Portæ inferi non prævalebunt*. "Quæ sunt portæ inferi, nisi potentes et perveraces mali, per quos multi intrant et descendunt ad inferum? qui

percusserunt pactum cum morte, et fecerunt fœdus cum inferno [Isai. xxviii. 15]."—Th. d. Villanova, *Concio* iii. in *Cath. S. Petri*, § vii.

³ "Quæ autem sunt portæ mortis, hoc est, portæ inferi, nisi singula quæque peccata? Si fornicatus fueris, portas mortis ingressus es. Si fidem læseris, portas inferi penetrasti. Si peccatum mortale commiseris, portas mortis intrasti. Sed potens est Deus;

Church, nor against the Rock on which that Church has been builded. Thus does He assure His disciples when assaulted by the temptations of the Evil One, and thus does He comfort them beforehand in the trouble which would fall upon them at the sight of His sufferings and death, and the sense of their being deserted by their Lord ; for if the utmost powers of man and of Satan, if *the gates of hell*, are never to prevail against His Church, still less could all these be successful in their assaults against Him, even though for a time they appeared to be successful in their efforts and to overcome Him in His crucifixion and death.

Ælfrie.

Tostatus.

Chrysostom.

But in saying that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against His Church*, our Blessed Lord in effect assures us of the constancy of the assaults which Satan will make upon that Church, and upon its members. The Church no less than individual Christians must experience trial and tribulation, assault and temptation, so long as the world lasts. As with men, so with the Church, it is not the removal of evil which is promised, but Divine strength and the presence of God, by which the evil may be overcome.

Barradine.

In these words, then, Christ promises to His Church—

(1) That the truth which Peter has here confessed shall never be lost to the great body of His faithful ones ; that the Church shall never, as a whole, fall from the faith nor lose its hold of the truth.

(2) That however corrupt many of the members of the Church shall be, it shall never be wholly depraved, nor fall utterly from that sanctity which it has through union with Him.

(3) That human councils and man's devices, and even Satan's assaults upon that Church, shall never *prevail against it* ; for since it is of God, it cannot be overthrown nor come to nought.

Tostatus.

Acts v. 38.

Faith is the foundation of the Church : so long as faith in Christ is firmly held, the gates of hell are powerless to injure the Church of Christ. This faith holds the keys of heaven, since it is faith in the Saviour which opens and shuts the kingdom of heaven.

Hilary de Trinitate.

(19) *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt bind*¹

Matt. xviii.

18.

Mark xvi. 18.

qui exaltet te de portis mortis ; ut annunties omnes laudes Ejus in portis filie Sion."—*Ambrose in Lucam.*

¹ "When immediately after the keys Christ goes on to speak of *binding* and *loosing*, this is not properly speaking a

transition to another figure, but is just equivalent to 'shutting and opening,' for the locks of the ancients had bands which were fastened or unfastened by the simple key-bar. (See Odyss. δ 803, θ 447, φ 45, 240.)"—*Stier's Words*

John xx. 23.
Rom. i. 16.

on earth shall be bound in heaven : and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Ps. cxxvii. 1.

Gorranna.

Chrysostom.

John xx. 23.

Theophylact.

Our Blessed Lord manifests his Godhead, and shows His essential majesty in the words which have gone before—I say. I who alone have power to declare the will of the Father—I who am the Word of God. Again He says, *I will build* : in this He claims to be God, for to build is the work of Eternal Wisdom ; for *except the Lord build the house, their labour is in vain that build it*. But more than this, He adds, *I will give* : I, who am the Giver of all good gifts to My people, *will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*. Christ says not, I will entreat the Father ; but, declaring His own essential Godhead, He says, *I will give*. His co-equality with the Father is shown in the mention of the two gifts ; for if the Father gave to Peter the revelation of the true nature of the Son, that same Son gave to His Apostles the gift which none but God could give, enabling them to sow the seed of the Word throughout the world. The very gifts, then, show that the Son is not inferior to the Father.

But though these words of Christ were spoken specifically to St. Peter on account of that confession of faith which he had just made, yet the gift which is here promised was given to him and to the rest of the Apostles at the same time, when our Blessed Lord declared, *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained* : for He does not here give this gift of the keys of the kingdom of heaven to St. Peter, but He promises that He will do so at a future time—I will give thee.¹ This He did when, after His resurrection, He bestowed the power here promised upon the whole of His Apostles.² This gift indeed He still confers, not limiting it to those

of the Lord Jesus, Eng. trans. vol. ii. p. 347. "At five o'clock in the evening of March 8, 1822, Wolff came up to the gates of Jerusalem. The gates were shut for fear of Aboo-goosh the robber, who frequently entered the town to plunder it. They were therefore obliged to send to the governor for the keys before Wolff could be admitted. The keys were brought and the gates were loosed, for the keys in use were pieces of wood, which do not lock, but in a measure tie the gates together. This explains that passage in Matt. xvi. 18, 19. The expression *bind* and *loose* there used is explained by the nature of the keys above mentioned."—*Travels of*

Dr. Wolff, vol. i. pp. 241, 242.

See also D. Martin, *Explication des Textes difficiles du Nouveau Testament*, pp. 449—463.

¹ "Dicit, *Dabo tibi* : nondum enim erant fabricatæ ; res autem non potest dari antequam sit. Fabricandæ autem hæ erant in passione ; unde in passione fuit eorum efficacia."—*Th. Aquinas*.

² Thus St. Chrysostom, at the beginning of the first homily on the Gospel of St. John, speaks of him as one "who holds the keys of heaven," ὁ ἀγαπητὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ στυλοῦς τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην Ἐκκλησιῶν, ὁ τὰς κλεῖς ἔχων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, ὁ τὰ ποτήριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ πίνων. κ. τ. λ.

only who were with Him during the time of His incarnate life on earth, but giving it to all bishops and priests in His Church. And this gift was entrusted to St. Peter and to the rest of the Apostles so long as they lived *on earth*, as it still is to the Church, with the same limitation, and with reference solely to those who are on the earth; for the Church can have neither jurisdiction nor power when men have passed from earth. And these keys, let us remember, are not of heaven, but of *the kingdom of heaven*—that is to say, of Christ's militant Church¹—for of heaven the *door was opened* by the death and ascension of Christ, for *He it is that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth*. The keys of the Church on earth are held by Christ pre-eminently, and all other ministers only through and from Him.

Bruno.

Hugo de S.
Claro.

Tostatus.

Rev. iv. 1.

Rev. iii. 7.

Tostatus.

These keys, then, are—

(1) The power of governing the Church of Christ, and so of receiving men into the Church, or of removing them from it; for all this pertains to government.

Jansen Yp.

(2) The right and authority to interpret Holy Scripture, and to make known to men the will of God. For he who governs a city has a right to admit into it as a citizen whomsoever he wills, and has also the prerogative of interpreting the laws of that city or kingdom.

Jans. Gand.

(3) All those means—whether the exercise of discipline, the teaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments—all those means, in short, by which men are fashioned in virtue, without which there is no entrance into heaven, of which the militant Church here on earth is the door.²

Theophylact.

(4) The absolution which the Church pronounces, whether this be complete, as in holy baptism, or partial and conditional, as upon the repentance of the sinner. For priests have absolute power neither to bind nor to unbind, but only to declare men bound or unbound, through the power of God Himself.³ For as under the old law the leper, who is the type of every sinner, was to present himself to the priest, who was to pronounce him clean or unclean—having, however, no power to make him either the one or the other—so these Apostles and ministers of Christ who are here directed to bind or unbind the sinner do so by declaring

Tostatus.

Lev. xiv. 2—
11.

¹ "Regnum cœlorum Ecclesia est, quæ lux interim est in terris sed commercium habens cum cœlo."—*Konigstejn*.

² See Dr. Döllinger's *First Age of the Church*, vol. i. p. 44, English

GOSP. VOL. III.

translation (1st edition).

³ "Quodcumque solveris: id est, si ministerium absolutionis adhibes. Et dicit, *Quodcumque*; quia non solam culpam sed pœnam."—*Th. Aquinas*.

Jerome.

that which God has already done. For the essential power of opening is in God only, who opens by the infusion of grace into the heart of the penitent, and by cleansing away the sin of which he has repented. This power is in Christ in a full and eminent manner by virtue of His incarnation, His sufferings, and death upon the cross: it is in the priest of the Church ministerially, who opens the door by means of the sacrament committed to his keeping.¹

Ludolph.

These keys, then, are held—

(1) By God Himself, the whole Three Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity; for since sin is an offence against God, He alone can remit and forgive the sins of man.

(2) By the Man Christ Jesus, God and Man, since by His death it is that the gates of heaven have been opened to men. He has this power as the great High Priest of this world by His own inherent right.

(3) By the ministers of the Church, in delegation from Him who is the great Head, the Rock on which the Church is builded.

Tostatus.

¹ See Peter Lombard in lib. Sententiarum, lib. iii. Dist. 17, § 5, and Estius, Commentaria in Magistrum Sententiarum, in loco.

••• “O Christ, who art the Son of God, and Rock of Salvation on whom the whole Church is built, and in whom to believe is to be saved: let me, by a holy faith, so be built on Thee that I may be blessed. Yea, Lord, do Thou so build me up as that no power of man or of Satan may ever pull me down. Let me lay the foundation of

my faith on Thee, my Saviour, and raise it up by love, lest I build my salvation upon the sand, and not on Thee, the only sure foundation. Keep me, Thou Holy Lamb of God, Thou Lion of the tribe of Judah, from the roaring lion and from the gates of hell. Amen.”—*Dean Brough*.

•• In commenting on the Gospel for St. Peter's Day, it is impossible wholly to put out of sight the controversies which in an early period, but more especially in recent times, have been occasioned by our Blessed Lord's words, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church*. By one class of interpreters these words are understood to refer primarily to St. Peter, and to mean that, as a reward for his faith and zeal, Christ hereby promises to build on him the fabric of His Church; and that in an especial sense, and more than the rest of the twelve Apostles, he shall be the foundation of the Church. The other class of interpreters refer these words to Christ Himself, who here makes use of a word, *this "rock,"* confessedly applied in many parts of Holy Scripture to the Great Head of the Church. Indeed "Rock" and "God" are by the translators of the Septuagint and Vulgate versions, as well as by other early translators of the Hebrew Scriptures, generally considered synonymous. Thus, in the Old Testament we read, "I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. *He is the Rock* [צור; Θεός, LXX.; 'Our God, the Strong' (*thaqīḏ*), Syriac Vers., with which agrees the Targum of Onkelos; 'Our God, the Creator' (*chāliq*), Arab.], His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth." (Deut. xxxii. 3, 4.) "He forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed *the Rock* [צור, Θεός] of his salvation ['lightly esteemed the most Powerful (*thaqīḏ*), who redeemed him,' Syriac Vers.] . . . Of *the Rock* [צור] that begat thee thou art unmindful [Θεὸν τὸν γεννήσαντά σε ἱγκατέλιπες, LXX.], and hast forgotten God that formed thee. . . . How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except *their Rock* [צור, Θεός αὐτῶν] had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up? For their rock is not as *our Rock*, even our enemies themselves being judges." ["Οτι οὐκ εἰσιν ὡς ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν οἱ θεοὶ αὐτῶν, οἱ δὲ ἔχθροὶ ἡμῶν ἀνόητοι.] (Deut. xxxii. 15, 18, 30, 31.) "There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside Thee: neither is there *any Rock like our God*" [צור, ὡς ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν]. (1 Sam. ii. 2.) "*The Lord is my Rock*" [ὁ Θεός μου φύλαξ ἔσται μου (LXX.), Κύριε, πέτρα μου (LXX), צורִי]; 2 Sam. xxii. 3; Ps. xviii. 2 [צור, βοηθός]; Ps. xxvii. 5 [צור, ἐν πέτρᾳ ὑψώσε με]. "The God of Israel said, *the Rock of Israel* spake to me" [צורִי צִיָּן]; which the Chaldee Paraphrast renders by: "The faithful God spake: I will constitute to Me a King: He is the Messiah who shall arise and reign in the fear of Jehovah." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3.) Throughout the Book of Psalms *the Rock* is used as a synonym of God; as, "Unto Thee will I cry, *O Lord my Rock*," where the Vulgate reads, "Ad Te, Domine, clamabo, Deus meus," and the Syriac, "My Lord, my God" (Ps. xxviii. 1). "Be Thou my strong *Rock* . . . For Thou art *my Rock*" [γενοῦ μοι εἰς Θεὸν ὑπερασπιστήν, LXX. "Esto mihi in Deum protectorem . . . quoniam fortitudo mea es Tu," Vulgate]: on which, as Bellarmine (*in Psalmos*) remarks, the proper rendering would be, "Esto mihi in petram fortissimam . . . quoniam petra mea." (Ps. xxxi. 2, 3.) "I will say unto *God my Rock* (צורִי), why hast Thou forgotten me?" (Ps. xlii. 10.) "*He only is my Rock and my Salvation*; He is my defence; . . . I shall not be moved. In God is my salvation and my glory: *the rock of my strength*, and my refuge, is in God." "Nam et Ipse Deus meus et salutaris meus; susceptor meus, non movebar amplius . . . non emigrabo. In Deo salutare meum et gloria mea, Deus auxilii mei."—Vulgate. (Ps. lxii. 2, 6, 7.) And to cite only one other passage from the Old Testament Scriptures, where in the English version we read, "Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, Thou hast ordained them for judgment; and O,

mighty God, Thou hast established them for correction" (Hab. i. 12); in the Hebrew we find *Rock* [צור], which has been translated in the Authorized Version by the words "mighty God." But we have not only to consider the positive evidence of these passages. The negative evidence is also great. Except, of course, in the primary and material sense of the word, *rock* is never used in Holy Scripture except as a synonym for God, unless indeed by *rock* in the first verse of the fifty-first chapter of Isaiah Abraham is meant, which is very doubtful. On this verse S. Jerome says, "Juxta LXX. persecutoribus justitiæ dicitur (קִדְּשֵׁי צִדִּיק, Heb. ; οἱ διώκοντες τὸ δίκαιον, Sept.) ut aspiciant in robustissimam petram, quam exciderunt et in foveam laci quam foderunt—id est, Dominum salvatorem : de quo Apostolus loquitur : *Petra autem erat Christus*." See also Haymo on this passage. The word *rock*, then, in the Old Testament Scriptures, expresses an incommunicable attribute of the Divine Being who is the Almighty, essential strength, the Rock. In the same way it is used also in the New Testament by St. Paul : "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them : and *that Rock was Christ*" (1 Cor. x. 4).

Whilst then this word *rock* is confessedly used in every other passage as a synonym for God, both in the Old and New Testaments (for the instance from Isaiah just mentioned is at best but doubtful), it is in the highest degree improbable that this name of Deity should be applied to man in one instance, unless it was used with some token to show that the general practice was here departed from, and that it was now applied in a different manner from that in which it is elsewhere used. And if the interpretation of this text, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church*, were merely doubtful, we could not, without very strong evidence in favour of the novel solution which modern Roman writers insist upon, apply the word *rock* here, and here only, to a man, and not to God. But that it is not doubtful is clear, when we consider the evidence of antiquity, and the recorded opinions of the most eminent divines of the Church on this subject.

Amongst the commentators, homily writers, or other theologians of the Western Church—for I confine myself entirely to these—who hold that these words do not refer to St. Peter, some assert that the word *rock* is but another name for Christ ; so that His promise here is that His Church shall be built upon Himself. Others, however, understand by *this rock* that foundation article of the faith, that Christ the Messiah is Son of God as well as Son of Man,—“Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world,” as well as “Very God of very God,”—and that the words imply not so much that the Church will be reared upon Himself personally, as upon this truth, that He who was incarnate was not only man, but God. In reality, the two interpretations are so little dissimilar that they must be regarded as one and the same ; and hence they are not only to be found in various writings of the same author, but even in explanations of the text occurring in the same commentary. There are then, in fact, only two interpretations to be considered :—

(1) By one class of writers it is alleged that these words refer to Christ, who is the Rock of the Church.

(2) By another class they are asserted not to be applicable to Christ, but to St. Peter, and that our Blessed Lord was here playing upon the name Peter, and declaring that Petrus is the *petra* of the Church.

It is probable that from a very early period the vague popular theology of the people gave currency to this latter and obvious interpretation—an interpretation, however, which was never accepted by the Church, nor endorsed with her authority. Indeed, we should have hardly had any evidences of the existence of any such interpretation, but for the commentators

in whose writings it is refuted, and from the fact that for a time St. Augustine held the same opinion, which he afterwards retracted. This popular interpretation, held loosely for a time, was first systematized in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the great Jesuit commentators, and is that which is generally, but by no means entirely, accepted by Roman writers of the present day. But when Salmeron definitely speaks of the first interpretation, by which these words are made to refer to Christ Himself, as that of “heretici et imperiti homines,” and then proceeds to refute and condemn such heretics and ignorant writers as Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Theophylact, and Origen, who in their respective commentaries assign these words to Christ, and with these men rebukes also St. Basil (de Trinitate), St. Hilary (de Trinitate), St. Ambrose (Epist. in Ephes.), St. Gregory the Great (in Psalmos), and St. Gregory Nyss. (contra Judæos), Cyril (de Trinitate), and Theodoret (in Cant.), it diminishes the value of his assertions and the force of his condemnation to find that the opinion of such men must first be condemned before the modern Roman view can be accepted; whilst those who in the present day hold with the great commentators and fathers of the Church in past ages, that the words *this rock* must necessarily refer to our Blessed Lord Himself, may well be content to submit to the reproach of being “heretici et imperiti homines,” since it is shared with such men as these. When, however, Salmeron, abandoning his attempt to refute the interpretation given invariably in the writings of these great and glorious pillars of the Christian Church, proceeds to build up the modern Roman theory, and to argue in its support that this is a specific and peculiar promise made to St. Peter, and that he is the *rock* on which the Church of Christ is builded, and endeavours to give strength to this interpretation by telling us that it is that which is held by “plurimi et gravissimi patres,” it is significant of the fewness of the number of these “gravissimi patres,” that the only ancient writer quoted by him, “instar multorum,” as he says, is Tertullian, who, in his treatise *De Pudicitia*, certainly seems to hold language in accordance with the recent interpretation of Roman writers. Had there been earlier and more unexceptionable witnesses, it is hardly to be believed that Salmeron would have put Tertullian in the fore part, “instar multorum,” as an evidence of the soundness of this opinion; or, at any rate, if he had cited Tertullian amongst others, it might fairly have been expected that he would have produced some other writing of his than a treatise put forth after his lapse into heresy, and indeed expressly written in support of that heresy—a treatise which, to use the words of St. Jerome, “Adversum poenitentiam scripsit, et sententiam veterem nova opinione dissolvit.” (S. Hieronymus ad Damas. ep. cxlvi.—*Opera*, edit. Paris, 1609.)

In connexion with the heresy of the latter part of Tertullian’s life and the book quoted by Salmeron, and these words of St. Jerome, it is singular that a similar attempt to apply these words to St. Peter should be charged as a perversion of Catholic truth against another early heretic, and that the defence of the anti-Roman interpretation should be undertaken by the same great doctor of the Western Church whom I have just cited. In his first book, *Adversus Jovinianum*, St. Jerome says, “Et dicis super Petrum fundatur Ecclesia: licet ad ipsum in alio loco super omnes Apostolos fiat, et cuncti claves regni cœlorum accipiant, et *ex æquo* super eos Ecclesiæ fortitudo solidetur, tamen propterea inter duodecim unus eligitur, ut, capite constituto, schismatis tollatur occasio.” This is in accordance with the interpretation in various parts of St. Jerome’s commentaries. For instance, his observation on Amos vi. 12 is: “In petris equi persequi non valent. Petra Christus est, qui donavit Apostolis Suis ut ipsi quoque petre vocentur;” and again in

his commentary on Galatians, chap. ii. 6, he remarks on the words of St. Paul: "Licet, inquit, Petrum et Joannem Dominus Secum Apostolos habuerit, et transfiguratum Eum in monte viderint, et *super ipsos Ecclesiæ sit positum fundamentum*, mihi tamen nihil refert." This appears to have been the way in which the whole Church understood the word *petra*, when applied to St. Peter. Thus *Tsaliba Ibn Yûhânæ* speaks of Paul as a *tsapha* as well as Peter, and whilst this Syriac word is used by him of the Apostles, he uses another when speaking of *the Rock*, Christ or the confession of Christ. Of St. Paul's going to Spain he says, "Then he built up the Church upon the *Sakhrûh* (the Rock) of the faith." Here the word from the Arabic means the one rock, the mass of rock.

It is, of course, an easy matter for controversialists to pick out from the voluminous writings of the early fathers of the Church fragments and expressions yielding more or less support to any theological tenet, to the most heterodox theory, or to the most fanciful opinion. A little skill in selecting passages favourable to their own opinions, and even the prepossession which leads the most honest partisan instinctively, and often unconsciously, to select what makes for his cause, and prevents him from seeing what is opposed to his own opinions, will suffice for this. Again, the rhetorical form of many of those writings,—the interpolations of theologians in past times, naturally anxious to find some support to their own opinions in the writings of the authorities accepted by the Church, and, when unable to find what they desired, sometimes careless enough to substitute a gloss of their own for the assertion which was not sufficiently explicit to suit their purpose—as well as the fallibility of the writers themselves,—and the fact that error, however multiform, is never novel, have, without detracting from the great and inestimable value of those writings, made discrimination and judgment indispensably necessary in those who would examine them to any profit. For this reason I pass by the miscellaneous writings, the epistles, the declamations, the apologies, and devotional treatises of the fathers of the Church. It is obvious that whatever passages can be pointed out in such writings which may be thought to yield some support to the interpretation which would make *the rock* another name for St. Peter, and not for Christ, cannot weigh for a moment against the formal statement of those who are engaged in an explanation of the passage itself. Thus, when St. Jerome, in the passage just cited from his Commentary on the Prophet Amos, says that all the Apostles were by our Blessed Lord called *Petræ*—or again, when Origen and other early writers speak rhetorically of all Christians who preserve their faith unshaken as so many Peters, and declare that to them equally with St. Peter were these words spoken—it is obvious that any chance expression, any assertion, that these words, *On this rock*, apply to the Apostle St. Peter, can lend no dogmatic value to an interpretation which would make them specially applicable to him. For this reason I confine myself to the examination of the commentators whose reputation for learning and orthodoxy is the most unimpeachable; and without pretending to make any wide search into all the volumes which have been written by writers of this character, it will probably be sufficient if I quote from those already made use of in these pages. I do so because they are at hand, within my own reach, in my own library. The least research would, I have no doubt, greatly augment the numbers of those who bear witness to the antiquity, the universality, the authority of that interpretation which refers these words to Christ Himself, and teaches us that when He said, *On this rock I will build My Church*, He referred to Himself as that One Foundation on which the Christian can alone be builded.

Of the commentaries preserved in the writings of the Fathers there can be no question ; and those who wish to see their testimony drawn out fairly, may consult with advantage a learned note in the Oxford translation of Tertullian (vol. i. p. 492, edit. 1842). I proceed to show that after their days and down to the time of the Reformation and the Council of Trent inclusive, the greatest commentators of the Western Church denied the applicability of these words to St. Peter, and referred them either to that article of the Creed which declares that Christ is both God and Man, or to the Person of the God-Man Christ Jesus, in whom were and are for ever united these two natures. Now this fact is one of more than ordinary significance, because it cannot be denied that the modern Roman interpretation is the natural and, as people would say, the rational interpretation of this text ; so that when we find the Fathers and the later theologians who have left commentaries behind them passing by the natural interpretation, and almost with one consent and with an uniformity which is scarcely to be found on any other text of Scripture or dogma of theology insisting upon another interpretation less obvious and easy, it is hard to account for this *consensus*, except on the ground that they were preserving for us the interpretation handed down by ecclesiastical and catholic tradition from the earliest times. For this is not the case of those who, speaking before a dogma was settled, or until a doctrine was largely denied, used language technically differing from that in which the doctrine was afterwards stated, and by which it was guarded—such, for instance, as many expressions in the writings of the ante-Nicene Fathers which seem to favour Arianism or Eutychianism—because of the utter unconsciousness of the writers of any such heresies. The passages to be cited from the commentators of the Middle Ages were penned with the perfect knowledge that a popular interpretation existed which appropriated these words to the Apostle, so that the passages are so many denials of the truth of such an interpretation, so many testimonies of the commentators and doctors of the Church to the proper meaning of the words of Christ, and to the sense in which the Catholic Church understood them.

The first witness to the meaning of these words whom I shall cite is one deserving of all respect and veneration from every member of the English Church. Few writers more deserve to be regarded as traditional interpreters of Holy Writ than *Venerable Bede* [A.D. 660–732]. In his Homily on this day he says, “*Et Ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus et super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam*, id est super Dominum Salvatorem, qui fidei sue cognitori, amatori, confessori, participium sui nominis donavit, ut à Petra Petrus vocaretur, suprâ quam ædificatur Ecclesia. Fundamentum enim aliud nemo potest ponere, præter id quod positum est, quod est Christus Jesus.” And these words of Bede were in accordance with the authoritative teaching of the Roman Church at that time. Thus in 796 *Pope Adrian the First* writing to the Spanish bishops, and quoting this text, adds, “Super hanc, inquit Petram, quam confessus es, et à quâ vocabuli sortitus es dignitatem : super hanc soliditatem fidei Ecclesiam Meam ædificabo.” (*Consilia Germaniæ*, t. i. p. 290.)

In the ninth century few commentators on Holy Scripture were more esteemed than *Haymo*, and his contemporary, *Rabanus Maurus*. Of the first, we possess Homilies on the Sunday and many of the Saint-Day Gospels ; of the latter, we have, amongst other writings, a Commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew. In his Homily on the Feast Day of SS. Peter and Paul, *Haymo* (ob. A.D. 834) says : “*Quia tu es Petrus. Sicut Lux vera Christus omnibus donavit Apostolis ut lux mundi dicerentur et essent, dicens, Vos*

estis lux mundi, similiter et à *petra*—hoc est à Seipso, de quo dicit Paulus Apostolus, *Petra autem erat Christus*—dedit nomen Petro, ut vocaretur Petrus. *Quia tu es Petrus*—id est, firmitas fidei quoniam veraciter Me protestatus es verum Filium Dei esse. *Et super hanc petram*—id est, super Me, quem confessus es Filium Dei esse.” (*Homiliae*, ed. 1531.) *Rabanus Maurus* (ob. A.D. 855), after noticing the analogy of the gift by which the true Light made the Apostles lights of the world, adds : “*Super hanc petram*—id est, super Dominum Salvatorem, qui fidei Suo cognitori, amatori, confessori participium Sui nominis donavit, ut scilicet à Petra Petrus vocaretur, ædificatur Ecclesia, quia non nisi per fidem et dilectionem Christi, per susceptionem sacramentorum Christi, per observantiam mandatorum Christi, ad sortem electorum et æternam pertingitur vitam, Apostolo attestante, qui ait : *Fundamentum enim nemo aliud potest ponere præter id quod positum est, qui est Jesus Christus.*” (*Opera*, ed. 1626.)

Ælfric, Archbishop of York (A.D. 1023–1051), in his Homilies, says : “Peter received that name because he had attached himself with a firm mind to Christ, who is called Stone by the Apostle Paul” (vol. i. p. 369, ed. 1846). And again, using language in common with most other commentators, and borrowed from St. Augustine (Serm. xxvi. in *Benedict. edit.*, Serm. lxxvi.), he says : “The Lord appointed him this name, Petrus, that is, *of stone*, to the end that he might be typical of Christ’s Church. Christ is called Petra, that is, *Stone*, and from that name the whole Christian people is called Petrus. Christ said, ‘Thou art of stone, and over this stone, that is, over the belief which thou now professest, I will build My Church.’ ‘Over Myself I will build My Church ; over Me I will build thee, not Me over thee. I am the firmness that shall hold thee and all the structure of the Christian Church.’” (*Ib.* vol. ii. p. 391.) In this interpretation he is in substantial agreement with the ancient collect of the Anglo-Saxon Church for the day of SS. Peter and Paul : “*Presta, quesumus, Omnipotens Deus, ut nullis nos permittas perturbationibus concuti, quos in Apostolicæ confessionis petra solidasti, per,*” etc.—*Anglo-Saxon Ritual of Durham*. (Surtees’ Society). In the same century we have the illustrious name of *Peter Damian* (A.D. 1074). Not only is he silent on this text in his sermon on St. Peter’s Day, but in that for the feast of St. John the Evangelist he says : “Petrus ; igitur Petra : *Tu es*, inquit, *Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam*. Petra quoque factus est Joannes, super cujus fidei fundamentum totius Ecclesiæ structura consurgit : quam, videlicet, sive hæreticorum furor impingat, sive tentationum irruat impetus, non evertit.” (*Op. Pet. Damiani*, tom. ii. Serm. lxiii. *De S. Joanne*, p. 300. Lugd. 1623). Here we note, not only the silence of this writer as to any special prerogative implied in these words, but the assertion that St. John is *petra* in the same sense in which St. Peter is. In the next century—I cite two commentators, one from Germany, the other from Italy—*Rupert*, the Abbot of the monastery of Deutch, who died, according to Labbe, in 1135, one of the great men of a great age, in his comment at this place says : “Apostoli Domini sunt cardines terræ. . . . Hinc est illud quod huic Simoni Petro dixit : *Et Ego dico tibi, quia tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam*. Super petram fidei, quam confessus est Petrus, Ecclesiam Suam ædificavit, eamque regendam illi, cæterisque Apostolis, eorum similibus commisit.” (*In Matthæum*, lib. iii. c. iv. *Opera*, t. ii. p. 599, edit. Venet. 1749.) In Italy, *S. Bruno Astensis* (A.D. 1125), in his commentary, thus paraphrases and annotates our Blessed Lord’s words, *super hanc petram* : “Si Petrum non intelligis, Petram respice : *Petra autem erat Christus*. Sic igitur à Petra Petrus, sicut à Christo Christianus. Videamus itaque quid sit,

Et super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam. Super hanc petram, quam tu modo in fidei fundamentum posuisti; super hanc fidem, quam tu modo docuisti, dicens: *Tu es Christus, Filius Dei vivi*; super hanc petram et super hanc fidem ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam." (*Opera*, vol. ii. p. 82. Romæ, 1791.) These words occur also in the homilies which go under the name of Eusebius Emisenus, the authorship of which is disputed. With this controversy we have no concern; we merely note that the occurrence of this interpretation in homilies of so great repute testifies to the tradition in the Western Church.

In the next century no names rank higher as expositors of the Bible than those of *Cardinal Hugo* and *Albertus Magnus*—the latter unequalled in any age of the Christian Church for his wondrous knowledge of Holy Scripture; so that for this reason alone, were there no others, he would well deserve the name of Great. And if the reputation of *Th. Aquinas* (nat. cir. 1224, ob. 1274 A.D.) rests rather on his dogmatic than on his expository works, yet his greatness as a theologian will not be questioned. In his commentary on this passage, *Cardinal Hugo* (ob. A.D. 1264) says, "*Super hanc petram—id est, super hoc fundamentum: Petra autem erat Christus.*" And again, "*Super hanc petram—id est, fidei firmitatem: Isa. xxviii. 16.*" So that to his mind there seemed no contradiction between these two interpretations. His contemporary, *Albertus Magnus* (ob. A.D. 1280), Bishop of Ratisbon, explaining, as is his custom, one text by other parts of Scripture, says: "*Ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam. Eph. ii. 20: Superædificati super fundamentum apostolorum et prophetarum, Ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Jesu.*" And again, in his sermon on St. Peter's Day (*in Festo ad Vincula; Opera*, lxii. p. 204): "*Nota quod Petra de qua habetur est Ipse Jesus Christus: de qua dicit Apostolus, 1 ad Cor. x., Petra autem erat Christus. Est autem hæc Petra commendabilis propter plura. 1. Est enim refugium peregrinantium. 2. Et securitas transmigrantium. 3. Et multiformis beatitudo regnantium,*" &c. *Thomas Aquinas*, though born after his great contemporary *Albert*, died about six years before him. With every wish to exalt the prerogative of St. Peter and of the Roman See, yet he says in his commentary at this place: "*Et super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam. Et ad hoc venit in hunc mundum ut Ecclesiam fundaret. Isa. xxviii. 16: 'Ecce ego ponam in fundamento Sion lapidem probatum angularem pretiosum, in fundamento fundatum.'* Iste signatus est per lapidem quem supposuit Jacob capiti, et unxit, ut habetur (Gen. ii. 8). Iste lapis est Christus, et ab ipsa unctione omnes dicti sunt Christiani: unde non solum dicimur Christiani a Christo, sed a Petra: Ideo specialiter imponit nomen *Tu es Petrus*, a petra, quæ est Christus. . . . Proprietas petræ est quod ponatur in fundamento: item ut det firmitatem. Supra vii. 24: *Similis est homini qui ædificat domum suam super petram.* Unde potest exponi de Christo. *Et super hanc petram*, id est Christum, ut sit fundamentum, et ut fundata firmamentum recipiat. Augustinus in libro *Retractationum* dicit, quod multipliciter exposuit, et reliquit audientibus ut acciperent quam vellent. Vel ut demonstret ly *hanc petram* Christum. 1 ad Corinth. x. 1: '*Petra autem erat Christus,*' et alibi 1 ad Corinth. iii. 2: '*Fundamentum aliud nemo potest ponere nisi id quod positum est, quod est Christus Jesus.*' Alia expositio. *Super hanc petram*, id est super te petram: quia a me trahes quod sis petra. Et sicut ego sum petra ita super te petram ædificabo, etc. Sed quid est? Est ne Christus et Petrus fundamentum? Dicendum, quod Christus secundum se, sed Petrus inquantum habet confessionem Christi, inquantum vicarius ejus. Ad Ephes. ii. 20: '*Superædificati super fundamentum Apostolorum et Prophetarum, ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Jesu.*' Apocalyp. xxi. 4: '*Fundamenta*

civitatis duodecim, et in ipsis duodecim nomina Apostolorum, et Agni.' Ideo Christus secundum se, est fundamentum ; sed Apostoli non secundum se, sed per concessionem Christi, et auctoritatem datam a Christo. Psal. lxxxvi. 1: 'Fundamenta ejus in montibus sanctis.' Sed specialiter Petri domus, quæ est fundata super petram, non diruetur, ut supra 7. Sic ista impugnari potest, expugnari non potest."—*S. Th. Aquinas, in Evan. Matt. c. xvi. § 2.*

In the next century, *Ludolph the Carthusian* (A.D. 1330), and *Simon de Cassia the Augustinian* (A.D. 1348), in their respective lives of our Blessed Lord, comment in the same manner. The former says, almost in the words of an older commentator: "*Super hanc petram, quam modo confessus es et quam tu modo in fidei fundamento posuisti—id est, super Christum — ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam.* Petra enim erat Christus, super quod fundamentum etiam ipse ædificatus est. Huic sententiæ Apostolus concordans ait, *Fundamentum aliud nemo potest ponere præter id quod positum est, Christus Jesus.*" (*Vita Christi Ludolphi*, pars ii. c. 1, p. 376, ed. 1641.) Whilst De Cassia, in a passage already partially quoted (p. 380, note 4) says: "Nulla domus est quæ non habeat sua fundamenta deorsum, sursumque tendunt parietes, desuper tecta ponuntur. . . . Sola Ecclesia sua fundamenta sursum habet. De cœlis est revelatio, de cœlis est confessio ; cœlestis est Fundator, cœlestique Fundamentum. Et propter cœlestia capessenda hujusmodi fundatio facta est. Quod homines sumus, terrenum fundamentum habemus, quoniam ex Adam terreno carnis propagatione traducimur. Quod verò fideles sumus, super cœlestia fundamur, non super Petrum, sed super Petram Christum, unigenitum Dei Filium, ore suo ex confessione veræ fidei revelatione Patris æterni depromptam. Petra autem erat Christus. Igitur ex terreno terreni, ex cœlesti cœlestes." (*Gesta Salvatoris Jesu Christi*, t. ii. pp. 77, 78, ed. Ratisbon, 1773.) In the same century (A.D. 1340) died *Nicholas de Lyra the Franciscan*, the compiler of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, a book of no common authority throughout the Western Church, and the favourite storehouse for divines during the next two centuries. The interpretation of this commentator agrees with that of the great men whom he succeeded. His words are, "*Ego dico tibi, pro te et pro sociis tuis quia tu es Petrus*, i. e. confessor Petræ veræ quæ Christus est factus *Et super hanc petram* quam confessus es, i. e. super Christum *ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam.*" (Postilla, ed. Venet. 1482.)

In the beginning of the following century, *Nicholas Gorranus the Dominican*, one of the glories of Merton College, in his commentary uses the words of Ludolph already cited, and adds: "*Super hanc petram—id est, hujus veritatis firmitatem, tanquam super fundamentum firmum — ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam.* Ephes. ii. 20: *Superædificati super fundamentum apostolorum et prophetarum.* Est ergo fundamentum Ecclesiæ Christus per auctoritatem, Apostoli per administrationem, prælati per ministerii participationem." He presents, however, no trace of the opinion that Peter was the Rock, or that he had place in that foundation, save as one of the Apostles of Christ, "fundamentum per administrationem." A little later in that same century lived one of the greatest commentators whom the Western Church ever produced, *Tostatus* (A.D. 1430), sometimes called from the name of his bishopric *Abulensis*, and characterised by Bellarmine as *Vir doctrinâ et sanctitate celeberrimus*. In his time it would seem that the popular opinion was beginning to be maintained, with some pertinacity, that Peter was the *Rock* on whom our Blessed Lord promised the Christian Church should be founded. This interpretation, however, Tostatus indignantly rejects. "Non est verum," he says, "quod super Petrum Ecclesia sit ædificata, nam id super quo ædificatur est fundamentum. Et sic Petrus diceretur fundamentum Ecclesiæ ; sed

falsum est, quia solus Christus est fundamentum. . . . Petrus membrum est et non caput Ecclesiæ nec fundamentum. Secundo patet, quia cum Ecclesiæ immortalis maneat, quia portæ inferi non prævalent adversus eam, ut patet in litera, necesse est quod fundamentum suum sit magis immortale, et tamen Petrus non fuit simpliciter immortalis in se nec in successoribus Petri. De Petro patet, quia post hæc dicta negavit Dominum ter, in quo Sathanas prævaluit contra ipsum, et sic jam portæ inferi prævalerent contra Ecclesiam, cum prævaluerint contra fundamentum evertendo illud; et tamen nunquam prævaluerunt contra Ecclesiam: ergo non erat fundamentum Petrus ecclesiæ. De successoribus Petri patet, quia multi eorum etiam canonice intrantes prolapsi sunt in hæresim, et alii in cultum idolorum, et possunt per Ecclesiam deponi et condemnari quando inveniuntur à fide devii, ut in Decretis 40. capite distinct. *Si Papa.* Ergo Ecclesia non errat et Papa errat. Et tamen si Papa esset fundamentum Ecclesiæ, necesse erat illo deficienti interire Ecclesiam, et non deficit, sed potius errantem Papam corrigit et punit, vel reducit ad veritatem: ergo non est Papa fundamentum Ecclesiæ, sed Ecclesia est fundamentum Papæ et mater ejus." (*Opera Tostati*, t. xxi. p. 304, ed. Venet. 1728.)

A little later in the same century lived *Dionysius the Carthusian* (A.D. 1460), who, in his comment upon this text, says: "*Quia tu es Petrus*, i. e. principalis et in fide firmus. Vel Petrus, i. e. veræ Petræ, qui est Christus, dignus confessor. Sic ergo imponitur ei novum nomen propter fidei suæ confessionem; et dicitur Petrus, qui Simon vocabatur. *Et super hanc petram*, hoc est, fidei hujus firmitatem et fundamentum; vel super hanc petram quam confessus es, hoc est, super Meipsum, lapidem angularem, montem altissimum, de quo ait Apostolus, *Fundamentum aliud nemo*," &c. (*Dionysii Carth. in Quat. Evang. Enarr.* fol. lix. ed. 1533.) At the close of this same century and the earlier part of the following lived *St. Thos. à Villanova* (1488–1555), Archbishop of Valentia, who, in his first homily, *In Cathedrâ S. Petri*, where antecedently we might have expected to find some recognition of this modern Roman doctrine respecting St. Peter, has not only no trace of this interpretation of the text, but having cited from Isaiah xxviii. the words, *Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation a stone*, adds: "Deus et homo futurus erat fundamentum fundatum in Sion. P. Augustinus, in Psal. lxxv.: Sion quasi patria est Judæorum; vera Sion Ecclesia est Christianorum. De fundamento: servus Dei Paulus, Ecclesiæ ædificator, qui dicebat: *Ut sapiens architectus fundamentum posui. Fundamentum*, inquit, *aliud nemo potest ponere præter id quod positum est, quod est Christus Jesus*. Ergo fundamentum positum in Sion, hoc est in Ecclesiâ, solus est Christus. Sed et ejusdem fundamenti lapis Christus est. Apostolus: *Petra autem erat Christus*." (S. Thomæ, à Villanova *Conciones*, t. ii. p. 594, ed. Milan, 1850.) Closely in accord with the language of Cardinal Tostatus, cited above, are the words of John Arboreus of the Sorbonne (1500–1550): "Non dixit Christus prævidens Petrum post-hac de fide periclitaturum, Super te extruam Ecclesiam Meam (siquidem debile esset fundamentum, nam Petrus defecit à fide negando Christum in Passione, et paulo post in hoc Cod. Evang. vocabitur à Domino Satanas, eò quod voluit impedire ne Christus properaret ad crucem pro salute nostra tolerandam) sed super hanc petram—hoc est, inconcussam hanc fidem quam professus es—ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam. Mihi videntur toto cœlo errare qui dicunt Ecclesiam esse ædificatam super Romanum pontificem, quamvis sit secundarium Ecclesiæ caput; nam Romanus pontifex potest esse hæreticus et schismaticus, potest et omnino deflectere à recto virtutum tramite. Fides autem Ecclesiæ stabit perpetuò immobilis, licet variis persecutionum

fluctibus concutiat. Sed qui dicunt Ecclesiam esse ædificatam super Petrum, non sumunt Petrum pro illo homine, sed pro typo Ecclesiæ; ita quod Petrus gerit typum Ecclesiæ et repræsentat solidam Ecclesiæ fidem." (*Doctissimi et uberrimi Comment. Joannis Arborei in Quat. Evan. Parisiis, 1551.*) Contemporaneous with the last writer lived *James Faber*, usually called *Faber Stapulensis*, who says, in his commentary on this passage: "Ab hac solida veritatis confessione, quæ à Deo Patre est et omni petra firmior, Simon cognomentum Petri accepit: et super hanc petram inconcussibilisque veritatis fidem, quod Christus est Filius Dei vivi, fundavit Dominus Ecclesiam Suam, adversus quam fidem firmissimamque confessionem non prævalebunt portæ inferi, quia nullum accipere valebunt qui hac inconcussibili petra et firmissima fide sit munitus. Et petram pro Christo et Verbo Dei accipi manifestat Dominus cum ait c. vii. hujus, hoc modo: *Omnis ergo qui audit verba Mea hæc, et facit ea, assimilabitur viro sapienti qui ædificavit domum suam supra petram.* Et subjungit, *Et descendit pluvia et venerunt flumina et flaverunt venti et irruerunt in domum illam, et non cecidit, fundata enim erat supra firmam petram.* Ecce quo pacto Se et verbum Suum vocat petram, et firmam quidem petram: supra quam nimirum inconcussabilis domus—id est, Ecclesia—ædificatur. Nequis dicat Petrum esse petram supra quam fundata est Ecclesia, nam quod Petrus non sit petra, et tanto quoque minus firma petra, Dominus paulo post satis detexit, cum dixit ei, *Vade retro Satana: scandala es Mihi: quia non sapis ea quæ Dei sunt sed ea quæ hominum.* Et Paulus Christum petram esse interpretatur, cum ait, *Bibebant autem de spirituali consequente eos Petra: Petra autem erat Christus.* Et si dicitur, ut quidam volunt, Petrus à Petra, ut Christianus à Christo: Christianus autem non est Christus, neque ergo Petrus petra." (*Fabro Stapulensi Comment. in Quat. Evan. fol. 74, ed. 1523.*) Contemporary with Faber Stapulensis lived *Francis Titelmunn*, a Friar Minor (A.D. 1530), who published, amongst other books, a commentary and paraphrase on the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. John. His writings fully entitle him to the eulogium pronounced on him by Bellarmine, who speaks of him as *Vir sanctus et doctus, cujus omnia scripta etiam philosophia miram pietatem spirant.* His paraphrase on this text is as follows: "*Et super hanc petram*—super hanc fidei veritatem quam es confessus, et quam protulisti, dicens, *Tu es Christus, Filius Dei vivi*; item et super Me, petram firmissimam, quam in prædicto verbo confessus es—Ego ædificabo atque superstruam ædificium Ecclesiæ Meæ, quam ædificare volo Patri Meo." (*Paraphrastica Elucidatio in Sacrosancta Jesu Christi Evangelia Fran. Titelmanno, fol. 54. Basil, 1546.*) Amongst the great preachers of this century, few were more famous than the Dominican *John Nyder*. In the "*Aurei Sermones*" (1480), in the sermon on St. Peter's Day preached on this text, "*Tu es Petrus*," are these words: "Primum est fundamentum quod est una firma fides Christiana quam Christus vocat *petram*, dicens *Super hanc petram*, non super Petrum. Prius enim ut præsens evangelium dicit Petrus Christum Dei vivi filium confessus est quæ fides petra est," etc. Nor in this language does he stand alone. Few of his contemporaries had a larger influence than *Gabriel Biel*, "*Ex ord. Clericorum in comun. Viventium*" (ob. 1495). The numerous works of his which survive attest his learning and his orthodoxy. In his *Sermones de Sanctis* (ed. 1515) he comments on this text thus: "*Tu es Christus Filius Dei vivi*, id est, Tu Domine de carne virginis factus es Christus qui vivi Dei filius es sempiternus. Tu Domine hominibus natus es homo: qui incogitabili majestate Deus es apud Deum. Tu es Christus qui pro redemptione nostra ad passionem veniens, impassibilis permanes apud Patrem. Hæc fides Petri atque professio veri-

tatem pertinens divinitatis et humanitatis Christi filii Dei vivi petra est supra quam Christus edificavit ecclesiam suam ; ait Aug. in sermone de præsentī festivitate."

With three other witnesses I quit this part of the subject. A few years after the last date, the celebrated Franciscan preacher, *John Ferus*, published his Commentary on St Matthew (A.D. 1559). On this text he observes : "*Tu es Petrus*. Vides Petrum sic appellatum esse propter fidei confessionem. . . . Solius Christi est ut sit Petra. Hoc autem novum nomen acquirit, qui supra hanc Petram ædificatur, quemadmodum in Petro vides. . . . Quæ sit petra super quam Ecclesia ædificata est inquirendum est. Scriptura petram nonnunquam accepit pro robore et firmitate vel securitate ; ut in Psalmo, &c. . . . Cùm igitur Christus dicit, *Super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam*, nihil aliud vult quam Se Ecclesiam ædificaturum super firmum immobileque fundamentum, contra quod nihil possint omnes adversariorum insultus. Et hoc claret, quòd Christus Ecclesiam Suam non super Petrum aut quemcunque alium hominem ædificavit, nullus enim homo tam firmus et constans, qui non possit moveri, id quod etiam in Petro manifestè videmus : alia igitur petra inquirenda est. Et quidem in Scriptura Sacra Ipse Christus frequenter lapis vel petra dicitur, ut apud Isaiam, &c. . . . Petra igitur primariè Christus est, cui tota Ecclesia superædificata est, juxta illud, *Fundamentum aliud nemo*, &c. Deinde quia per veram fidem Christo conjungimur, ac si quodammodo et nos petrascimus (si sic licet loqui), et ipsa igitur fides Christiana et veritas Evangelica firma et inconcussa petra illa est super quam Christus ædificavit Ecclesiam Suam." (*In Evang. secundum Matthæum, per Joan. Ferum*, t. ii. pp. 23, 24, ed. 1609.) *John Soarez*, an Augustinian friar, Bishop of Coimbria in Spain, and one of the fathers at the Council of Trent, has left us commentaries on the first three Gospels. He was living and wrote at a time when the present Roman interpretation of this text was obtaining favour, and was gradually being adopted informally but at length almost universally by the Roman Church, and his comments show signs of the change which was taking place in this respect, and yet he is a witness against the received Roman interpretation of this declaration of Christ. His words are : "*Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram* quam confessus es—hoc est, super Me ; seu super hanc confessionem fidei ; vel super te, tanquam super secundarium lapidem fundamenti." (*Commentarius in Evang. secundum Matthæum à D. Joan Soarez*. Venetiis, 1565.) With the testimony of Stella the Franciscan preacher I end this list of commentators. He in his commentary on St. Luke says, "*Super hanc petram*, hoc est super hanc fidei firmitatem, quam modò confessus est, ait Christus, *ædificabo Ecclesiam Meam*. Et quia Ecclesia est fundata super hanc firmam petram et veritatem infallibilem portæ inferi non prævalebunt adversus eam." It is significant that this volume had been rigidly examined and corrected by the Inquisition of Spain.

I might extend these extracts almost indefinitely, but enough have been cited to show that the modern Roman theory obtains no sanction from the great commentators of the Middle Ages. The authors whom I have quoted are of all ages, from the seventh century to the sixteenth inclusive : they are of all countries and conditions of life—saints and cardinals, bishops and priests, seculars and regulars, monks and friars of various orders, Benedictine, Augustinian, Dominican, Carthusian, and Franciscan—men whose learning is evidenced in every page of their volumes, and whose orthodoxy is unquestioned. In their writings we find the catholic interpretation of our Blessed Lord's words, *Upon this rock I will build My Church*, maintained and illustrated. And certainly such names as Venerable Bede, Pope Adrian,

Haymo, Rabanus Maurus, Archbishop Ælfric, Peter Damian, Rupertus Tuitiensis, S. Bruno Astensis, Cardinal Hugo, Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Ludolph, Simon de Cassia, Nicholas de Lyra, Nicholas Gorranus, Cardinal Tostatus, Dionysius Carthusianus (*Doctor extaticus*), S. Thomas à Villanova, John Arboreus, Faber Stapulensis, Francis Titelmann, John Nyder, Gabriel Biel, John Ferus, Didacius Stella, and John Soarez, cannot be set aside as either "heretici" or "imperiti." I doubt not that it would be an easy matter to quadruple the number of such witnesses, but it is needless for me to do so. They are a sufficiently imposing cloud of witnesses to the truth, that the Catholic Church from the first has ever interpreted these words of Christ, *this rock*, as the name of Him who alone is alike the Rock of the Church, and of the individual believer.

For this was not merely the interpretation of Western commentators, however illustrious for position, for holiness, or for learning; it was, until recent times, the common if not the only authoritative interpretation of the Roman See. It is the teaching of the most popular *Postilla*, issued before the Council of Trent for the instruction and use of the clergy in preaching. See e. g. *Postilla Epistolarum et Evangeliorum*, Rouen, 1515, and the *Postillæ majores cum questionibus*, Lyons, 1523. Whilst amongst the fathers and doctors of the Church in the West, as well as in the East, who have interpreted the "rock" to mean Christ Himself, or the true faith in the Incarnate Saviour, are included at least ten of the Popes of Rome. (See *Palmer's Treatise on the Church*, vol. ii. p. 484.) When Gregory the Seventh was desirous of ratifying the election of some of the German princes who had placed Rodolph of Swabia on the throne of the Empire, he, claiming the right to bestow the diadem, sent him a crown with these words:—

"Petra dedit Petro. Petrus diadema Rodolpho."

Hallam, Middle Ages, chap. vii.

Indeed, like other dogmata now accepted and taught by Roman Catholic divines, this interpretation of the words of Christ is not authorized by that Church, and has not so much been formally promulgated by the Roman Church as tacitly accepted by her when taught without authority by some of her sons. The Council of Trent certainly understood these words, *the rock*, to mean the faith in the Incarnate Saviour. Thus in the Third Session of that Council, after stating the necessity of repressing the heretical opinions which abounded on all sides, it was decreed "Quare symbolum fidei, quo sancta Romana Ecclesia utitur, tanquam principium illud, in quo omnes, qui fidem Christi profitentur, necessario conveniunt, ac fundamentum firmum et unicum, contra quod portæ inferi nunquam prævalebunt (Matt. xvi.), totidem verbis, quibus in omnibus ecclesiis legitur, exprimendum esse censuit."

But perhaps to many minds the absence of any word in the writings of S. Bernard, and of his disciples Guerricus and Gillebertus, which would lend any support to the modern Roman interpretation, will be as significant as even the positive testimony of most other men. The glowing way in which this last of the Fathers, this first of the Schoolmen, speaks of the prerogatives and privileges of St. Peter, and yet his seeming unconsciousness that these words, *this rock*, could by any stretch of the imagination be applied to this Apostle, are irreconcilable with the notion that the modern interpretation was known and accepted by him. But the Church's unbroken silence is far more significant than the silence of any father, bishop, or other theologian, however illustrious. And on this subject the Church, in her symbolical books, her creeds, her formularies, is strikingly silent. If in any place the Church

Catholic had put her authoritative seal to that interpretation which would refer these words to St. Peter, some trace would surely be found in the poetry of the Church ; in her songs of thanksgiving ; especially in her commemoration of the virtues and great privileges of this Apostle of Christ. The hymns, the proses, the sequences of the Church, used on the Feast Day of St. Peter, or on that of the two great Apostles SS. Peter and Paul, abound with every epithet of honour which can be bestowed on the great Apostle except this. In the language of one hymn, a fair specimen of those appointed for these days, he is the "janitor coeli," the

"Senatus Apostolici,
Princeps et præco Domini,
Pastor prime fidelium
Custodi gregem creditum," &c.
Daniel, Thesaurus Hymnologus, t. i. p. 226.

But he is not called "Petra Ecclesiæ."

Again, in another hymn, we find every prerogative of St. Peter enumerated, and even reference made to these very words of our Blessed Lord ; but the author significantly passes over this image of the Rock :—

"Tu beatus es Barjona,
Cui aspirat Sua dona,
Quasi nato Spiritus,
Quod caro sanguisque nescit :
Per Patrem tibi patescit
Revelatum coelitus.

"Tibi claves Deus dedit
Quibus porta coeli cedit :
Prævalentque inferis
Potestate formidanda
Hic ligas illic liganda :
Tuta sunt quæ solveris."—*Daniel, t. ii. p. 224.*

Here then, whilst every other title is recounted, there is a noticeable omission of that of "Petra Ecclesiæ," which, had modern theories been known, we should surely have found in the most conspicuous part of the hymn.

It is proverbially difficult to prove a negative, and it would be unsafe to assert that no reference to St. Peter as *petra* occurs in any of the ancient hymns which have ever been generally received and sung in the Church. I have, however, looked through all those which are to be found in Daniel's collection (*Thesaurus Hymnologus*), and this epithet is not to be found in any of those which he has collected. Even Peter Abelard, the rival and opponent of S. Bernard, who, however he opposed him in other things, did not yield to him in his glowing language when the prerogatives of St. Peter were in question, is equally silent on this subject :—

"Princeps apicis Apostolici,
Pastor ovium gregis Domini,
Has custodia serva vigili.

"Arte melius utens pristina,
Piscans homines trahe retia,
Complens Domini sic pollicita,

ST. PETER'S DAY.

"Fortis claviger aulæ coelicæ,
Fores aperi, manum porrige ;
Quos ad Dominum ducis suscipe."

Pet. Abelardi Opera, ed. Cousin, vol. i. p. 320.

The nearest approach to any reference to these words of Christ which I have been able to find in any old hymn occurs in the Parisian Missal ; but here, whatever prerogative is attributed to St. Peter, he shares with St. Paul. Of these two the prose for the 29th of June (the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul) declares :—

"Hi sunt Sion fundamenta,
Hi columnæ fulcimenta,
Turres, propugnacula," &c.

Indeed the part of the Gospel where these words occur is appointed in the Roman Church not for St. Peter's Day, as with us, but for the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul.

We have already seen that S. Jerome, S. Chrysostom, and S. Peter Damian give the name *petra* to St. John as well as to St. Peter, as in this hymn we find St. Paul sharing with St. Peter in the same appellative. In the same way the first-named Father in several places calls Andrew, and James, and John, equally with Peter, a *κορυφαίος* of the Church. (*Manning on the Unity of the Church*, p. 153, note.)

Why do all these hymns, &c. present such an uniform silence on this point, except because the Church has ever attributed these words of Christ, *ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ*, upon this rock, not to St. Peter, but to our Blessed Lord Himself? who, in the language of the hymn in the Parisian Missal for this day, is

"Regnator,
O pastorum, Christe, Pastor."

Hymn in Festo SS. Pet. et Pauli.

Language widely different from that used in many writings after the Council of Trent, in which the incommunicable prerogatives of Christ are attributed to His apostle, and we are shocked at reading "de corpore Beati Petri hoc est Ecclesiæ, cujus caput est Christus." (*Pet. Alfon. de Vasconcelos de harmonia rubricarum. Madriti*, 1590, p. 89.)

It was not until the faith of men in the claims of the Roman See had been greatly shaken that an additional support was sought for its authority in the words of Christ addressed to Peter. Then the unauthorized and popular interpretation was at length tacitly accepted, although it was an interpretation which was opposed to that which the great divines of the Western Church had almost uniformly taught for well-nigh fourteen centuries. Where, or indeed when, an opinion first rises, is, from the nature of the case, hard to determine ; but so far as I have been able to trace the acceptance of the modern interpretation of these words by commentators of repute, this, like other novel dogmata, such as the "Filioque" and the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin, seems to have been first taught authoritatively and technically by Spanish theologians, and from them was gradually adopted by other Roman Catholic divines, until at length it has become the usual and all but official exposition which the Roman Church of our own times has affixed to these words of Christ. This was the more easy, as at the period of the Reformation the ablest commentators, perhaps the ablest theologians, in the whole Catholic Church, at least in the Western branch of it, were to be found amongst the divines of Spain and Portugal.

ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE.¹

ST. MATTHEW XX. 20—28.

(20) *Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him.*

Matt. iv. 21.
Mark x. 35.

JAMES and John, the two sons of Zebedee² here spoken of, asked of Christ this *certain thing* through their mother, Salome, shrinking themselves, it may be, from a direct application to our Blessed Lord, but putting their mother forward to make the request for them, or at least acquiescing in the request which she made for them. Whether, indeed, the desire was suggested by maternal ambition, or not, we are not told, and it is useless to speculate as to the origin and motives of conduct about which we can never know more than is here related. All we are told by St. Matthew is, that the mother made the desire known to Christ, and that her two sons were responsible for her request. So much, indeed was this petition their act, that St. Mark speaks naturally of their asking, and does so without making any mention of the mother. And that this was their own request is evident not only from the language of St. Mark, but also from the circumstance that, according to both

Matt. xxvii.
56.
Mark xv. 40.

Æcumenius.

Olshausen.

Liénard.

¹ "*James the Greater* : so called for that he was elected an Apostle before James the son of Alphæus, otherwise styled James the Less. Or *James the Greater*, because he was more familiar and great with his Master Christ than that other James; for, as we read in the Gospel history, Jesus suffered none of His Apostles to see His transfiguration [Matt. xvii. 1], or the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead [Luke viii. 51], save Peter, and James, and

John. Or *James the Greater*, for that he was endued with great courage to drink first of Christ's cup, and to become the first martyr of all the twelve Apostles,"—*Dean Boys*.

² "Multorum hodie persuasio est Zebedæi filios fuisse Christo consanguineos : sed ejus rei Scriptura nusquam ullam dat significationem ; nam nec mater eorum Salome nec Zebedæus leguntur Christum aut matrem Ejus sanguine attigisse."—*Estius*.

Evangelists, the whole of Christ's reply was addressed not to the mother, but to the sons themselves.¹

Jana. Gand.

Stier.

Sylveira.

Theophylact.

Luca Brug.

Cajetan.

Titelmann.

Matt. xix. 28.

Chrysostom.

The raising of Lazarus had already taken place; the enmity of the Jews was evidently increasing; their conspiracy to seize and destroy Christ had already been made; His death, as He, who knows all things, well knew, was near at hand, and hence the prediction of His sufferings and the declarations of His approaching crucifixion. But so deeply was the notion of earthly glory implanted in the minds of the Jews in connexion with the reign of Christ, and so firmly were they persuaded of the temporal nature of His kingdom, that even when He spoke of sufferings and of death, His disciples thought only of that pomp and magnificence and worldly power which, in common with the rest of their nation, they expected Him to assume, and they put out of sight the prophecy of suffering and humiliation, and all the plain predictions of the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ. And now, as He was going up to Jerusalem, and was beginning to speak of the accomplishment of His mission, His Apostles, and amongst them these sons of Zebedee, thought that He was about to set up that earthly dominion, and to commence His reign of glory. The resurrection, indeed, of which He had just spoken was His entrance into glory, the beginning of the glory of His kingdom. But this was no worldly glory, not such a kingdom as they expected, and in which they all hoped to obtain various stations and dignities.

Then—that is, when He was going up to Jerusalem to suffer, and to overcome the prince of this world by His death upon the cross: *then*—as soon as they had heard Him speak of His resurrection, imagining, perhaps, that this, like His transfiguration, would be a manifestation of the glory of His kingdom; but, unlike that, be seen and acknowledged by all; *then*—when He had promised that the whole of His Apostles should sit on the thrones of judgment, *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*:² those two, through their mother, endeavoured to obtain from Him the primacy of honour and power in His kingdom. Salome was one of those women

¹ "Mater postulat, et Dominus discipulis loquitur; intelligens preces ejus ex filiorum descendere voluntate."—*Jerome*. "Filiis respondet, qui per matrem petierant."—*Emman. Sd.*

² "From the whole matter it appears that none of Christ's disciples imagined He had promised the supremacy to Peter by these words, *Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church.*

For then neither would these two persons have desired it, nor would the rest have contended for it afterwards [Luke xxii. 24]."—*Whitby*. But though they could not have understood those words of their Lord in the sense which modern interpretation has put on them, yet it would seem as though the ambition of these two brethren was stimulated in some sort by these words.

who had been privileged to minister to Christ; and this, and the love which our Blessed Lord bore to St. John, and the privilege which the two brethren had shared with St. Peter of a closer intimacy with their Master, might have led them to expect that they should be singled out for no common honour, and that they should be distinguished above their brother Apostles.

Mark xv. 40;
xvi. 1.

Worshipping Him and desiring; that is, worshipping Him in order to obtain her desires; and asking *a certain thing*; that is, as the word means, asking a great and unwonted favour.¹ So do many now worship Christ, not from pure and single-minded love to Him, but in order that they may obtain *a certain thing*—worldly greatness and advancement—from Him by so doing; and this they seek without regard to the fitness of time, and pray for, however inopportune those prayers may be.²

Maldonatus.

Salmeron.

(21) *And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom.*

1 Kings ii. 19;
xxii. 19.
Ps. xlv. 9.
Matt. xvi. 27,
28; xix. 28.
Heb. xii. 2.

It is comparatively an easy matter for men to despise riches, and to overcome their love for worldly pleasure and ease. Few, however, are proof against the temptations of worldly station, of earthly power and honour, and the esteem or admiration of the world. These two Apostles had accompanied our Blessed Lord throughout His mission of three years; they had left their father, they had given up their worldly calling and possessions, and had followed their Divine Master. They, however, who could turn their backs upon the allurements of pleasure, were not dead to the solicitations of worldly greatness, and though they followed Christ they thirsted for pre-eminence.³

Chrysostom.

Th. & Villar
nova.

¹ *A certain thing.* “*Aliquid* hoc loco non diminutionem sed incrementum potius videtur significare, quasi dicat, petens magnum quiddam ab Eo: sic enim Græci loquuntur εἰς αὐτὸν, ‘esse aliquid’—id est, esse magnum: sicut et Galli solent dicere, ‘videtur sibi aliquid esse’—id est, magnus esse vir: quemadmodum Paulus loquitur Actorum xxiii. 17: *Adolescens hunc perduc ad Tribunal, habet enim aliquid indicare illi*—id est, rem magni momenti.”—*Maldonatus.*

² “Ambitio et invidia nec modum

nec locum quarunt: in Ecclesia, in altari, in choro, in die passionis Domini non quiescunt.”—*Soares.* “Certè hic potius imminens Christi passio deflenda videbatur. Mulier tamen, filiorum ambitioni annuens, primas sedes ipsis procurat; ambitio enim, omnis moram impatiens, opportunum tempus non expectat, sed, semper importuna, ubique se ingerit.”—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione.*

³ “Relicto patre Zebedæo in navi sequuti sunt Christum, [Matt. iv. 21], et tamen modo in schola Christi primas

There are three kinds of rule spoken of in the Bible—

(1) Earthly rule, of which Christ afterwards speaks when He says, *The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.* To this rule Saul was anointed by Samuel, and this was exercised by the kings who governed the people of God with earthly sovereignty at Jerusalem and Samaria.

1 Sam. viii.
20; x. 1.

(2) The rule in God's Church—ecclesiastical power in that body which is the kingdom of heaven upon earth. Of this rule the requirements are, that *whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; according to the words and the example of Him who shows Himself the Good Shepherd by giving His life for the sheep.*

John x. 11.

(3) The rule celestial, which manifests itself in making those who submit like Him who rules in that kingdom; for if we be indeed the faithful and obedient sons of God, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, then, *when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.* It was in this last kind of rule that the sons of Zebedee desired to share, unknowing, at the same time, the conditions of that rule.

1 John iii. 1,
2

Paulus de
Palacio.

They sought to sit with Him on His throne—that is, to rule with Him in His Church; for this is meant when we read in Holy Scripture of a throne, as for instance, *The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David*—that is, the right to rule over the possessions of David. Hence their mother asked that these who were the relatives of Christ after the flesh, and so of the lineage of David, might rule over their kindred, when He ascended the throne and assumed that power which they thought He was about to manifest; a power which, if spiritual, yet should, as they supposed, be like the powers of the world.¹ Their request was that they might have the seat of chief authority on earth through their nearness to Christ, not seeking an equal place with the other Apostles, but one which was superior to that of their brethren.

Luke i. 32.

Alb. Magnus.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.
Luke xix. 11.

Cajetan.

Matt. xxvi.
39, 42.

(22) *But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not*

sedes ambiunt. Sic sæpe contigit, quod illi qui mundum reliquerunt, in Christi clauastro multi primatum quærent.—*Sylveira.*

¹ “*Nescitis quid petatis; quasi dicat: Temporalia non debetis petere, sed excellentiam spiritualem. Vel si intellexerent spirituale, petebant quod super*

omnem creaturam haberent eminentiam: quia sedere à dexteris nulli creaturæ convenit, ut habetur ad Hebr. i. 13, Ad quem angelorum dixit aliquando: Sedo à dextris meis? Unde sedere a dextris excedit omnem creaturam.—*Th. Aquinas.*

*what ye ask.*¹ *Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?*² *They say unto Him, We are able.*

Mark xiv. 36.
Luke xii. 50;
xxii. 42.
John xviii.
11.

As by suffering Christ was to ascend to His glory, so does He here point out to these ambitious Apostles the road by which they, and all who would ascend with Him, must reach that height to which He was about to ascend.

S. Bernard,
Serm.
xxxlii. in
Cant.
S. Gregorius,
Hom.
xxvii. in
Evan.

Ye know not what ye ask. They mistook entirely the nature of His mission, and therefore they were unable to ask of Him aright.

(1) They thought that His kingdom was to be an earthly one, and that station and power in that kingdom was to be gained by the same means which men use to obtain similar station in an earthly kingdom. Chrysostom.

(2) They thought that they already possessed those qualifications which were sufficient to assure them a pre-eminent station in Christ's kingdom; seeking to triumph before they had obtained that victory over themselves, the world, and Satan, without which there is no entry into the kingdom of God. Hilary.

(3) They thought that the claims of friendship would be regarded in the distribution of the honours which Christ had to give, and that because their mother was one of those who ministered to our Blessed Lord of her substance, that therefore they should obtain a more considerable post in His kingdom. Jans. Gand.
Tirinus.

Ye know not what ye ask. For in seeking a post of eminence in Christ's kingdom they knew not that this would only be given to those who were the more lowly; that the more they would be exalted in that kingdom, the

¹ "*Nescitis quid petatis. Ac si diceret Si scirent homines quantum sit in prælatione periculi, quidque requirat Deus et Paulus ab eo qui prælatus futurus est, quid, demum, debeat prælatus ovibus suis, nemo prælatus esse vellet. Quis enim nimium pauper, decem mille filios ut ab eo alantur habere vellet? Quis pauper, alieno ære gravari cupit? Quis ascendens onustus onere gravi, mille graviora pondera sibi imponi desideret? Quis languidus, multorum sibi languores asciscat? At prælatus alere suos greges, rationem pro eis ponere, onera eorum subire, languoribus eorum languere debet. Nescitis igitur*

quid petatis. Creditis vos petere honorem, et petitis summum onus, summum periculum. Petit calicem exultationis, et vere non est exultationis sed continuæ passionis." — *Paulus de Palatio.*

² *Tischendorf* omits these words, *καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα, ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι*, which he supposes to have been inserted from the corresponding passage in St. Mark's Gospel. In this *Alford* concurs. *Wordsworth*, however, retains them. The evidence for their retention is about equal to that for their removal.

Salmeron.

Matt. xxiii.
12.

Maldonatus.

Acts xiv. 22.

Barradius.

Ps. cxix. 35.

Gregory.

Jans. Gand.

Rom. viii. 26.

Stier.

Nicolaides.

Ecumenius.

more must they be abased in their own eyes, and stoop not as men stoop who seek the prizes of worldly ambition, but with lowliness of heart; for *whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.*¹ *Ye know not what ye ask*—not that which they sought, to be in Christ's presence; to be ever near to Him was good in itself, but they knew not that this was only to be attained through self-denial, humiliation, and suffering; for *we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.* They sought rest from their toils, and therefore to sit on these thrones, for sitting implies rest after labour. But they sought this on earth, not knowing that rest is not to be found on earth, but in heaven alone. *Ye know not, therefore, what ye ask.* They sought only for the end. Christ points out to them the only way by which that end can be gained, as He keeps ever before the eyes of His people the way in which He would have them walk—the way of His commandments. Thus does He who is *the Truth* call us into the only way by which we may attain unto *the life eternal.*

Ye know not what ye ask—not merely what ye have asked, but what ye are ever seeking and asking. It is the state of ignorance respecting His mission and kingdom which is here reproved.² We know not what we ask so long as it is not the Holy Spirit who teaches us what to ask; for *we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us.*³ We understand not the Lord's prayer, though it is ever on our lips. The ignorance of the flesh and the pride of our own spirit ever move us to pray, Give Thy kingdom to us; let us have some place, some share, in Thy kingdom; whereas we ought simply to pray, Let *Thy kingdom come.*

By the *cup* here spoken of our Blessed Lord means His death; by the *baptism*, all those sufferings by which men are purified: the *cup* of suffering and of death, which should redeem men from the power and the hand of Satan; the *baptism* of blood, which should be for the purification of the souls of His redeemed ones. Not that by the words *cup*

¹ "Nesciunt ambitiosi esse ambitiosi, nesciunt ambire magna. Ambitiosi sunt viri sancti (liceat sic loqui); cupidi sunt, sed rerum magnarum. Non terrena ambiunt mox peritura, sed cœlestia in sempiternum permansura. Non pictos fictosque honores exquirunt, sed ad veros solidosque anhelant. Non humiles dignitates, sed sublimes in cœlo sedes

concupiscunt; non opessuspिरantsœculi, sed æternæ vitæ avari sunt."—*Barradius.*

² "Nam mysterium crucis nondum erat consummatum, nec adhuc erant in gratia consummati."—*Joan. Arboreus.*

³ "Spiritus Adami non exauditur, sed spiritus Christi."—*Ferus.*

and *baptism* death and suffering are necessarily meant, for in other places of Holy Scripture *cup* is only used metaphorically for lot or portion, be it evil or good ; but Christ's *cup* and *baptism*—that portion which He had taken to Himself for us—was one of bitterness, of suffering, and of death.¹ Lamy.

And He asks, significantly, whether they were able to drink of His cup, not of their own. For though they were to taste the cup of martyrdom, both of them in will, and one even unto death, yet is it not the pain and suffering of the martyr which constitutes its worth and preciousness in God's sight, but whether it be for Christ, whether it be indeed His cup or not. Toplarus.

This it is which is the consolation of the sufferer in the midst of his pains of body or mind, to know that he is draining not his own cup, but that of his Lord and Master ; that it is Christ's cup of which he is being made a partaker, and that the Incarnate Saviour drank of that same cup before him, and, by drinking, sanctified it to him. Ferns.

There is this distinction to be observed between the cup and the baptism here spoken of. The *cup* implies something to be inwardly tasted ; the *baptism* chiefly something to be outwardly applied.² The former relates more to the will of those who taste ; the latter to the severity of the sufferings of those who endure : for the *baptism* which they are to partake of is not regarded in its aspect of purification so much as in that of suffering. It was to be a baptism which was that of Christ, because He was to go before and to receive it first for them. Our Blessed Lord's words in effect are : Have ye the will to taste of My cup ? have ye the patience and strength to endure the sufferings which shall come upon them that are Mine ?³ Salmeron. Matt. Faber. Stier. Barradius.

They say unto Him, We are able.

¹ "Maldonatus, Cornelius, et alii interpretes referunt fuisse in Scripturis metaphoram calicis ex veteri deductam more, quo inter Judæos paterfamilias, aut quisquis in convivio honoratissimus erat, vinum pro suo arbitrio temperabat, et unicuique convivæ, alii plus, alii minus, distribuebat. Itaque aliis melior, aliis pejor portio contingebat. Petentibus ergo Apostolis primas regni sedes satis difficile examen proponit Christus, *Potestis bibere calicem ?* Ut nempe ad alterius voluntatem submittant et componant, et non pro suo natu, sed pro alterius voluntatis arbitrio potionem deteriore

vel majorem bibant et gustent ; et adeo est durum et acerbum ab alieno nutu pendere et alterius arbitrio regi, ut Dominicæ passioni assimiletur, sitque morum examen ad primas sedes in Christi regno obtinendas."—Sylvira.

² Τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ τὸ ποτήριον. "Baptismus extrâ hominem abluit, calix intus afficit : ita passio Domini partim externa, partim interna fuit."—Matt. Faber.

³ "Discipuli postulabant honores : Christus offert labores. Postulabant primas sedes : offert calicem. Extra viam gradiebantur : in viam illos reducit."—Barradius.

Chrysostom.
Dion. Carth.
Leontius.
Corn. & Lap.

Th. Aquinas.
Maldonatus.
Sylveira.

Estius.

John xiii. 36.

Barradius.

Matt. xxv. 34.
Acta xii. 2.
Rom. viii. 17.
1 Cor. ii. 9.
2 Cor. i. 7.
Heb. xi. 16.
Rev. i. 9.

Dean Boys.

By many these words are considered to have been spoken presumptuously, and in reliance on their own strength. Others, however, think that they imply rather a reliance on the power of Christ to strengthen, and were spoken by the inspiration of the Spirit. The former opinion would seem the more likely, and more agreeable to the whole narrative. They came seeking that which they knew not, and they thought that they had strength which we know they had not. They were, indeed, no more proof, by nature, against fear and falling away than was St. Peter himself, who believed, as James and John did, that he had strength to keep steadfastly to Christ, but of whom our Blessed Lord declared emphatically, *Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.*

The words of these two brothers, however, contain a truth for us all. *We are able* to resist and to overcome all temptation—*able* through Christ who strengthens us. *We are able* to persevere in the way to our eternal inheritance—*able* because Christ abides with us. *We are able* to keep ourselves pure from the pollution of the flesh, the corruption of the world, the deeds of Satan—*able* through the sanctifying Spirit, the Comforter, whom Christ has given us. *We are able* to bridle the flesh, to trample on Satan, to rise above the world—*able* through His might, who overcame all these for us, and, overcoming in our nature, has given to that nature power, through our engrafting into Him, also to overcome.

(23) *And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but [it shall be given to them¹] for whom it is prepared of My Father.*

Our Blessed Lord does not say, Ye are able, or ye can drink of My cup, but *ye shall drink*. They had not this power of themselves, but yet He promises that they shall so drink, because He knew what should befall them, and that power would be given to them from on high to suffer for His sake.² *Ye shall drink indeed of My cup of suffering;*

¹ These words inserted into the English version destroy the meaning of the passage, which is similar to that in xix. 11, ἀλλ' οἷς, *save to those for whom it is prepared*. "Regnum cœlorum non est dantis sed accipientis, considerata quidem Dei justitia, qui reddet unicui-

que secundum opus suum [Apoc. xxi. 12]."—Joan. Arboreus.

² "Ye shall drink indeed, saith Christ. He says not, ye can (to take them off from their own reliance), but He enabled them both to drink of it."—Sparke's Scintillula.

for in that He says *My cup*, He told them that their sufferings here should be on His account, and have some resemblance to His. Both these brethren drank of His cup; they were both *baptized with the baptism* that He was *baptized with*. St. John, indeed, died a natural death, but it was after having tasted of the bitterness of suffering for his Master's sake, and, as ecclesiastical history tells us, after having been condemned to death, and only by God's power preserved from actual martyrdom, after he had tasted of its bitterness. St. James was the first of the Apostolic band who was put to death.¹

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Jerome.

Tertullian,
De Præss.
Her.
Acts xli. 2.

To sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but for them (ἀλλ' οἷς) for whom it is prepared of My Father. They sought it on the ground of special favour: our Blessed Lord tells them that it is not to be given from any such motives, but only on account of the fitness of those who seek to enter in; not of human weakness, but of justice to those who by God's grace lead lives responsive to that grace. Those only who are proved to be true witnesses for Christ—who live truly according to His will, holy in life and pure in belief—those only can possess that kingdom and those honours which St. James and St. John unknowingly sought; for a place at Christ's right hand is prepared only for those who labour truly in God's vineyard, who overcome sin, and persevere in the way of holiness. Such honours are not Christ's to give; and this, not from any failure of His power, who is Almighty, but because He who is *the Just One* cannot do unjustly. He does not deny that He has the power to dispense this great gift when He says that it is not His to give, except to those for whom His Father has prepared it. Nay, He expressly includes Himself, since *all that the Father hath*—all power, all prerogatives—are His. He does but assert the perfect unity of His will and His actions with the will and the actions of the Father.² As to themselves, He denies only that the gift which they sought might be given from the motives which they imagined. It is not His to give—

Eccumenius.

Theophylact.

Acts iii. 14.

Euthymius.

John xvi. 15.

Estius.

¹ "Est hoc oraculum Christi de Jacobi et Joannis passione et martyrio. S. Jacobus enim ferventiùs ceteris Apostolis prædicans Christum, primus pro Eo martyr occubuit, gladio percussus ab Herode: Joannes item hunc calicem bibit, cum Romæ ante portam Latinam à Domitiano in dolium ferventis olei immissus, vegetior inde exivit et novo virtutis miraculo martyr in vita, non moriens sed vivens extitit, indeque

ad suscipiendam coronam Christi athleta processit, ait S. Hieronymus."—*Corn. à Lapide*.

² "Non negat se posse dare, sed illis quibus paratum est à Patre: in quo se unius voluntatis cum Patre ostendit, et Dei Filium; cui eadem est voluntas cum Patre, communis, quia dum postulatur ratione propinquitatis humanæ, dare illis se negat ratione unius voluntatis divinæ."—*Suarez*.

(1) To those who ask only, but to those who strive and persevere in holiness: not to *give*, but to adjudge, to those who shall be worthy of the honour. For those who would strive after special honours, even though they are intended for them, do not obtain, unless they are prepared to receive these honours; for *if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.*¹

(2) He was looked upon by His disciples as man; they came to Him as to a man, and expected Him to act from the motives which actuate men. But as man it was not His to give eternal life, but only as God. Our Blessed Lord's words, then, are, It is not Mine to give in the way which ye desire—as a man gives; nor those things which ye desire—earthly honours. But what I give must be given by My Father also; by Me, that is, only so far forth as I am God: and what I give is spiritual, not worldly, greatness.

Here, then, we have the mystery of man's free will, and his power to thwart the purposes of God. The very gifts of God, free and unbounded as they are in the gracious purposes of God, depend not on the power of the Giver alone, but on the fitness and the preparation of heart in the receiver. And man, powerless as he is of himself for good, may be strengthened by the Evil One to frustrate the merciful intentions of God.

Again, let us note that all the Blessed Lord here says is that it is not in His power to oppose His Father's will. He cannot give to any except to those for whom the kingdom has been prepared—to the humble, contrite, faithful children of God. But in saying that He cannot give to any save these, He expressly asserts that He has the power, the prerogative of giving; that every good and perfect gift is from Him as well as from the Father.

Let the Christian, in the midst of his sufferings, remember that the baptism with which he is baptized is that from which he will rise speedily; that the *cup* which is held out to him is not for ever, that it is but a momentary draught compared with the fountain of joy which he will possess throughout eternity.²

¹ "Si tales estis qui consequamini regnum cœlorum, quod Pater Meus triumphantibus præparavit, vos quoque accipietis illud item, *Non est Meum dare vobis, sed quibus paratum est*: non est Meum dare superbis, hoc enim adhuc erant; sed si vultis illud accipere, nolite esse quod estis. Aliis paratum est; et vos alii estote, et vobis paratum

est. Quid est, alii estote? prius humiliamini, qui jam vultis exaltari."—*Rab. Maurus.*

² "Vitæus est calix, non permanet diu: paulo post frangetur. Tartarus calix ferreus est, in sempiternum hauritur: nunquam frangitur. Ne nos calicis ferrei bibamus æternum amaritudinem, satius est vitrei fugacem bibere insuavi-

(24) *And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.* Mark x. 41.
Luke xxii.
24.

They were moved, we are told, with indignation, not against the mother who had made the request, but *against the two brethren*, thus recognising, as St. Mark expressly tells us, that it was James and John who were the real petitioners. They were angry, not at the worldliness of the request, nor at the low and mistaken notion which these brothers had of Christ's kingdom, for in this they all alike erred; nor were they indignant at their carnal ambition or desire for worldly honour, for this they all at that time longed for; but they *were moved with indignation* that they should aspire to an eminence above the rest of the Apostles. Cajetan.

Lucas Brug.

In the worldly ambition of James and John, and in the indignation of the other ten, who were actuated by the self-same spirit as that which dictated the request of the two sons of Zebedee, we have an instance of imperfect knowledge as well as of the imperfection of passion, both of which were evident so often in the disciples of Christ, until, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the eyes of their mind were enlightened and the storm of passion was assuaged.¹ Hofmeister.

Chrysostom.

(25) *But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.*

Jesus called them unto Him, and reproved at once the ambition of the two and the indignation of the rest of the Apostles. At His side earthly ambition has no place, nor the anger which separates brethren. *He called them unto Him*, and by nearness to Him He assuaged the passion which can only rage where He is not. Cajetan.
Emm. ab
Incarnat.

In these words our Blessed Lord dissuades His Apostles,

tatem. Parvus est calix, non potest multum potus amari continere."—*Baradius*.

¹ "All the twelve were faulty: two sinned in ambition, and ten in envy. 'Isti,' quoth Anselm, 'ambitiosi, illi invidiosi, utrique tamen nobis profuerunt.' James and John were carnal in their pride, the rest as carnal in their malice: yet we may reap benefit from

them all, for here we may see that even the best men have their infirmities: and they be recorded in Holy Bible for our learning, that we might neither presume, because the chief saints have had their alips; nor yet despair, because Christ Himself forgives them and enjoineth others also to strengthen them."—*Dean Boys*.

and through them warns us, against worldly ambition and self-seeking, by two arguments—

(1) It is a mere worldly practice: it is the custom of *the princes of the Gentiles*, who know not the will of God.

Salmeron.

(2) It is contrary to that example which He Himself gives to them, that perfect pattern of lowliness and humility which they were each of them to imitate.

Luca Brug.

Ambition, then, is a Gentile fault, the custom of those outside the Church of God; it is not a Christian practice, nor is it permitted to those who would tread in Christ's footsteps. Especially is this vice forbidden to the ministers of His Church. They are expressly interdicted from seeking power, but are called upon to strive assiduously to do their duty, not as rulers, but as ministers of their Master's flock.¹

Chrysostom.

But if our Blessed Lord thus reproveth ambition in His Apostles and immediate followers, let us remember that this is even less excusable in us than it was in them, and that when we give way to this passion we sin more than they did. They knew not, until afterwards, what we know—the full mystery of His passion. They knew not then what we know now—that His kingdom is not of this world, that it is a spiritual dominion. They knew not fully what we know—the unworldly character of His mission to man. Their error, so far from excusing us, deprives us of all real excuse; their mistakes teach us what we are to shun, and point out for what we are to strive.²

Barradius.

Matt. xxiii.

11.
Mark ix. 35;
x. 43.
1 Pet. v. 3.
Matt. xviii. 4.

(26) *But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great (θέλη ἐν, ὑμῖν μέγας) among you, let him be your minister; (27) and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.*

Whosoever will be great, whosoever, that is, wisheth, or desireth, to be great, *whosoever* wisheth to be really first, *πρῶτος*, in Christ's kingdom, there is to him but one road,—let him serve.

Mariana.

It is not rule and order which is here forbidden, but ambition; and Christ teaches those who rule and minister in His Church to shun the pomp and the show of authority of earthly princes, and to copy the example of love and tenderness of Him who is the Good Shepherd, and the chief Minister of His people.

¹ "O vere venenum charitatis cupiditas: venenum concordiae ambitio! Quis crederet inter piscatores pauperes, et hos Christi collegas, futuram de summo loco discordiam?"—*Paulus de*

Palacio.

² "Observe St. Matthew's ingenuousness, recording his own failings and those of his brethren—a proof of truth."—*Wordsworth.*

Here, then, Christ teaches James and John, as well as the rest of the Apostles, the way to that eminence which alone is worthy of a Christian's desires; and shows that it is only to be attained by the road of humility; that if we would live with Christ in glory, we can only do so by abasing ourselves now, by seeking to be, not the ruler, but the minister. In this is seen the difference between the world and Christ.¹ The greatness of this world consists in the exercise of power and in ruling over men; the greatness of the servants of Christ consists in their faithfulness to His service and in exercising the office of their ministry. Corn. & Lap.
Cajetan.

(28) *Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom² for many.* Isa. liii. 10.
Dan. ix. 24.
Matt. xxvi.
28.
Luke xxii.
27.
John xi. 51;
xiii. 4, 5.
Phil. ii. 7.
1 Tim ii. 6.
Tit. ii. 14.
Heb. ix. 28.
1 Pet. i. 19.
Emm. ab
Incarnat.

In giving Himself the title of humiliation, *the Son of Man*, Christ continues His rebuke against worldly ambition and the wish for earthly exaltation. He was *the Son of Man* because He had abased Himself to this. And He here proposes Himself as the pattern for all His disciples.

Our Blessed Lord does not say that He was not ministered to, but that He did not come for this end. He was, as we know, ministered to by Martha, and by Salome, and many others; but He came not for this; and He only regarded and sought that for which He had come into this world. Hence He speaks of Himself, emphatically, as *the Son of Man*; for by His incarnation He came for this end, *to minister* to man, to lead a life of toil and suffering, to wait upon the waywardness of man, and *to minister* to his needs. John xii. 2.
Luke viii. 2,
3.
Cajetan.
Jerome.
Emm. ab
Incarnat.

In order, then, that He might instruct us in the duty of Christian humility, and warn us against ambition and striving for the pre-eminence, He gave us an example of humility in His own person, who, though He was the Lord of the whole earth, yet stooped to *the form of a servant*, and ministered unto men; teaching us thereby how we are to act, and giving us, by His humiliation, strength to follow His example. But, in copying that example, let us remember that, however greatly we humble ourselves, however lowly Phil. ii. 7.
Barradius.

¹ "Principatus gentium est ad dominandum: principatus vester erit ad serviendum."—Cajetan.

² "Λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν is a plain declaration of the sacrificial and vicarious nature of the death of our Lord. The principal usages of λύτρον are the

following:—(1) A payment as equivalent for a life destroyed, Exod. xxi. 30; (2) the price of redemption of a slave, Lev. xxv. 51 al.; (3) 'propitiation for,' as in Prov. xiii. 8, where Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion have ἱξί-λασμα."—Alford.

we bend ourselves, we cannot descend, we cannot humiliate ourselves so deeply as Christ did.

He came to give His life a ransom—the price by which *many* would be freed from servitude. To ransom—

(1) The soul from sin and from subjection to Satan, by taking away the sins of the world.

(2) He came to give His life as a ransom, so as to deliver our bodies from the power of death.¹

He came to give His life a ransom for all, since He died for all. For all He laid down His life: all He redeemed. Many, however, by their own choice and free will reject this mercy which Christ came to offer, and remain in bondage to the Evil One, and are the slaves of their lusts; so that, though He died for all, yet His death will only avail to the *many* who obey His will and walk in the way of His commandments, and to whom His death will be the very means of life.² But for all those who will so believe He not only died but His death will be efficacious, delivering them from sin and restoring them to that freedom which they have lost by servitude to the appetites of the flesh, to the fashions and opinions of the world, and to Satan.

¹ "Qui resurgit in anima resurget in corpore ad vitam,"—*Bernard*.

² "Pro multis—id est, pro omnibus: ad Roman. v. 19, *Peccatores constituti sunt multi*—id est, omnes."—*Mariana*. "As respects the use of πολλῶν in this passage, and which is found also at Matt. xxvi. 28, Mark xiv. 24 (while at 1 Tim. ii. 6 there stands πάντων), the

passage Rom. v. 15, 18, 19, is particularly instructive, for both expressions are there interchanged. We may say, that while πάντων points to the Divine intention, πολλῶν refers to the result. As respects His love, Christ died for *all*, although the power of His death, the fruit of that love, only falls to the lot of *many*."—*Alshausen*.

••• "Domine Jesu Christe, qui pro nostra salute calicem passionis bibere et baptismo sanguinis perfundi voluisti, et non temporaliter dominari et ministrari, sed humiliter servire et ministrare, ac vitam Tuam pro nostra redemptione dare venisti, da mihi misero, pro meo modulo, Tui calicis et baptismi cum patientia et gaudio Spiritus participem

fieri, et Te Magistrum ac Dominum in humilitatis operibus imitari; et non solum in operibus misericordiae ministerium proximis impendere, sed etiam vitam, si necesse est, pro eis ponere; ac tandem ad regnum electis Tuis paratum feliciter pervenire. Amen."—*Ludolph*.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW THE APOSTLE.

ST. LUKE XXII. 24—30.¹

(24) *And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.* Mark ix. 34.
Luke ix. 46.

And there was also a strife, φιλονεικία,² among them even on this very evening, at this solemn moment, when the death of our Blessed Lord was being plotted and hastened by the malice of the Pharisees, at the table where He had just instituted the Holy Eucharist, the pledge of their communion with Him and with each other. And on this very account also, that He had been speaking of the certainty of His death, and that one of themselves should betray Him. As with the two sons of Zebedee, so now with the rest of the Apostles, this strife would seem to have been a contest amongst them for the primacy in Christ's Church and kingdom, a dispute as to who was the fittest to occupy their Master's place when He was taken away from them. Stier.

Luca Brug.

Jans. Gand.
Ludolph.

To the zeal of Peter Christ might have seemed to have promised pre-eminence. He, with James and John, had been singled out for closer intimacy with the Redeemer. They alone had been present on the Mount of Transfiguration; they alone had been admitted with the father and mother of the child whom Christ raised from the dead; and probably on other unrecorded events there had been the same selection. The boldness of Peter, the love of John, the nearness according to the flesh of the sons of Zebedee, might seem to have marked out one and all of them for primacy and rule above the rest of the Apostles; and hence, it may be, the *strife* which now sprung up *among them*. This *strife* had doubtless its rise in the mistaken views

¹ See Commentary on "The week next before Easter," § 2, vol. i. pp. 455—457 (third edition). this noun in the Canonical Scriptures. It is however used in 2 Macc. iv. 4, and the corresponding adjective occurs

² The only instance of the use of in 1 Cor. xi. 16.

Hofmeister.

which possessed them all, as to that kingdom which was now about to be established.¹

Luke xxii.
16, 18.

Piscator.

Tirinus.

Cajetan.

1 Cor. iii. 8.

Bonaven-
tura.
John xiv. 27.

Stella.

The tokens of His kingly character which were evidenced at our Blessed Lord's entry into Jerusalem; the manifestations of power which were made when He purged the temple of those who profaned it by their presence; and now His declaration that He would no more eat of the Passover, and that He would *not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God should come*, had raised the expectation of the Apostles, and led them to believe that the setting up of His kingdom in all its worldly magnificence was at hand. Nothing, indeed, can so fully declare the ignorance as to our Blessed Lord's mission, which prevented the Apostles from understanding the meaning of His frequent predictions of His sufferings and death, as this contention. He spake to them, as it seems to us, most clearly of the tribulations which awaited Him, of the sufferings which should be the lot of His disciples, of the spiritual nature of His kingdom, and yet we find them still clinging to the belief that His manifestation of worldly glory was at hand: thus it is evident if in any degree they comprehended the meaning of His declaration that He was going up to Jerusalem to death, yet they looked beyond this, and supposed that earthly greatness was to follow, or that they were to be left behind Him to inherit the glory and to share in the power which, in their minds, was inseparable from the idea of His kingdom.

Strifes and contentions are signs of a desire after our private interests, our self-seeking. Strife for the chief place in the world or in the Church is the mark of an ambitious heart; it is, as the Apostle St. Paul expressly tells us, the sign of a *carnal* mind. This passion, as is evident from many incidents in the lives of the Apostles, was neither extinguished nor controlled until the coming of the Holy Ghost. The removal of this enemy to all peace was the result of that gift which Christ promised to His Apostles when He said, *Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you.*

And yet, let us mark, it is not said that they strove which should be the *greatest*, but which should be *accounted* so. As in all strivings of ambitious men, it was the estimation of the world which was contended for by the Apostles, and reproved by our Blessed Lord.

Let us remember why the failings and the sins of men who, on the whole, are the servants of God, have been

¹ "Occasio contentionis opinio falsa de Christi regno."—*Mariana, Scholia in Vet. et Nov. Test.*

recorded.¹ Not that we should despise or undervalue the saints of Christ, but that we should, from their shortcomings and sins, recognize our own weakness and acknowledge our readiness to fall away from grace. The sin of the Apostles then is a twofold one:—

(1) They sinned by their ambitious desires, their wish for the pre-eminence.

(2) By their strife and contention with each other.

Toplarius.

(25) *And He said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.*

Matt. xx. 25.
Mark x. 42.

The world gives the title of “benefactors” only to those who are great in power. In the kingdom of Christ, however, this greatness consists, not in power, but in the giving of benefits to others in the humblest services.

Plumptre.

Some commentators, anxious for the credit of the Apostles, have strangely supposed that this was a contention for the lowest place, a contest which arose out of a desire that others should be placed in the highest station; but this supposition is opposed to the whole tenor of the narrative: it is at variance with the reproof which our Blessed Lord uttered, and to that lesson of humility which He gave by His own actions, all of which would have been unnecessary had this been a generous strife of those who were moved by a desire for humiliation. That this interpretation is incorrect is evident from the lesson of lowliness which Christ taught them by showing—

Chrysostom.

(1) That this strife for pre-eminence is the custom of those who have not the grace of God, and who are not actuated by His spirit—the kings of the Gentiles,² to whom

¹ “Sicut bonis esse moris solet in Scripturis semper exempla patrum præcedentium, quibus ad meliora proficiant, quibus agnitis de suis actibus humiliantur, inquirere, sic è contrario reprobis si quid forte in electis reprehensibile reperiunt, quasi suas ex eo nequitias obiecturi. Ideoque multo ardentius legunt, quod facta est contentio inter discipulos Christi quis eorum videretur esse major, quam quod multitudinis credentium erat cor et anima una. Multo recolunt tenacius quod facta est dissensio inter Barnabam et Paulum, ita ut discederent ab invicem, quam quod idem Paulus ait, Cum

enim sit inter vos zelus et contentio, nonne carnales estis? Nonne homines estis? quasi nobis infirmitas sanctorum imitanda proponatur, et non illud potius, quia convalescerunt de infirmitate, fortes facti sunt in bello, hoc maxime in loco, ubi et ipsa contentionis eorum causa est nobis incognita.”—Bede.

² “Εὐσεργίας apud Græcos erat vocabulum honoris, quod tribuebatur omnino iis qui bene meriti essent de rebus civitatis alicujus, qui eam vel ornassent et auxissent, vel a periculis et incommodis defendissent et liberassent. Respondet formulæ Lat. *Pater patriæ*. Sic Onias, 2 Macc. iv. 2,

the title of *benefactor*, "Energetes," was very commonly given.

Phil. ii. 7.

(2) That it is opposed to His example, who, although Lord of all, yet *made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant*, in order that He might minister to men.

Alb. Magnus.

(3) He showed the folly of such ambitious strivings by pointing out the equality of the Apostles amongst themselves, as evidenced in the circumstance that they were to sit on similar thrones for a similar purpose.

Stella.

(4) By revealing to them that the kingdom which they were hereafter to possess is already prepared, and that their place in it is fixed and determined, and that this will be given to them without any ambitious strivings on their part to obtain it.

Matt. xx. 26.
Luke ix. 48.
1 Pet. v. 3.

(26) *But ye shall not be so : but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger ; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.*

Hofmeister.

But ye shall not be so. That is, I have not chosen you to bear rule of this kind, to administer the laws of an earthly kingdom, but to be ministers of the Gospel, showing forth an example of tenderness, of humility, of self-denial, of self-forgetfulness, of patient endurance of wrong, and of earnestness and zeal in the work of the ministry.¹

Salmeron.

Our Blessed Lord does not say that some are not to be *chief* and bear rule, but He says that such as are great in His kingdom—such as are *chief*—are to show this by ministering to others. Again, His ministers are not to be *called*

dicatur ὁ ἐνεργέτης τῆς πόλεως. Sed κατ' ἐξοχὴν hoc cognomen datum est regibus (Ptolemæus Energetes) et civitatum principibus, et sic hoc loco tanquam honorificus titulus regum et principum commemoratur."—*Kwinoel*. "Duo Ptolemæi per ea tempora Energetæ — id est, benefici — vocabantur, alioqui pessimi viri; ideo ut Athene. lib. xii. dicat posteriorem ab Alexandrinis vocatum κακουργέτης — id est, maleficum."—*Mariana*.

¹ Quand nous saurions le même détail des actions de S. Barthelemi ou de S. Thomas, nous n'en tirerions pas d'autres instructions; la curiosité seulement seroit plus satisfaite; mais elle est de ces passions que l'évangile nous apprend à mortifier. Au contraire, le

silence des Apôtres est d'une grande instruction pour nous. Rien ne prouve mieux qu'ils ne cherchoient point leur propre gloire, que le peu de soin qu'ils ont pris de conserver dans la mémoire des hommes les grandes choses qu'ils ont faites. Il suffisoit pour la gloire de Dieu et pour l'instruction de la postérité qu'une petite partie fût connue : l'oubli qui ensevelit le reste est plus avantageux aux Apôtres que toutes les histoires, puisqu'il ne laisse pas d'être constant qu'ils avoient converti des peuples innombrables. La meilleure preuve de la sagesse des architectes et du travail des ouvriers est la grandeur et la solidité des édifices."—*Fleury, Prem. Discours sur l'Hist. Eccles.*

benefactors; they are not to strive for empty honours, but are to rule by their real service, by their labours for others. Stier.

What, then, is forbidden here is that the ministers of Christ's Church should imitate the example of the kings of the Gentiles, who are desirous of obtaining power and of exercising dominion over others. Such men are more pleased at being addressed and regarded as *benefactors* than anxious to benefit others; seeking their own glory and advantage, not the good of the people entrusted to them and over whom they bear rule. Estius.

Such an example is held up to the ministers of God's Church, not for their imitation, but for their warning; since they are not themselves the *benefactors*, but only the stewards and dispensers of those gifts which God has entrusted to them to distribute to others.¹ Hugo de S. Claro.

(27) *For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.* Matt. xx. 23.
Luke xii. 37.
John xiii. 13,
14.
Phil. ii. 7.

In the estimation of the world those who serve others are the lowlier. But our Blessed Lord here says that this is not so in His kingdom, since He who by nature is the Highest has made Himself the servant of all. Therefore, since He has so done—since He has so humbled Himself—the offices of humiliation are not marks of inferiority, but rather of greatness. Alb. Magnus.

As He is our great High Priest, going before us in all our journey, so does He inculcate the lessons of humility and the duty of service towards each other by His own example. He had just washed the feet of all His Apostles; He had waited upon them as a servant, offering them the bread which was broken for them, and handing to them the cup which was shed for them; in all things affording them and us an example, that we should follow His steps. Cajetan.

Theophylact.
1 Pet. ii. 21.

(28) *Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations.* Matt. xi. 27.
Luke xviii.
28.
Heb. ii. 18;
iv. 15.

¹ “Una datur omnibus forma sententiæ, ut non de prælatione jactantia sit, sed de humilitate contentio; eoque se Dominus proponit imitandum. Egebamus omnium, Ipse nullorum; et tamen præbuit Se humilitatis auctorem; cum discipulis ministraret. Quod utique non faciebat studio utilitatis, sed exer-

citatione virtutis. Ille major et celsior inter Ecclesiæ pastores et ministros, qui humilior, qui præesse non amat et clero dominari, sed prodesse Ecclesiæ et ejus membris, laboriosa, indefessa, et nunquam otiosa caritate; exemplo Christi, animarum supremi Domini ac Pastoris.”
—*Alexander Natalis.*

This is the commendation of the saint of God ; not merely that he has remained with Christ, but that he has so continued notwithstanding the *temptations* which have surrounded him, and which have tried the reality of his faith in His Divine Master. Many, indeed, throng around their Lord in the joy of His resurrection ; few stand beneath His cross and are the companions and sharers in His sufferings.

Stella.

Estius.

Soarez.

The *temptations* here spoken of are all the tribulations, persecutions, and sufferings which Christ endured whilst with His Apostles ; His being stoned, reviled as a Samaritan and a friend and companion of publicans and sinners, His being rejected by the Scribes and Pharisees and persecuted by the priests, as well as those trials of faith to which the Apostles were exposed at the sight of His human weakness and suffering—the contrast between His claim to possess Divine power, and the many tokens which declared Him to be indeed human. The temptations which our Blessed Lord here speaks of specially as His temptations are—

Heb. iv. 15.

(1) Those trials which befell Him, and which He endured on account of man, when He was *tried in all points as we are*—and overcame, that He might thereby give us grace to overcome also.¹

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Stella.

Zech. ii. 8.

Acts ix. 4.

Matt. xxv.
40.

(2) The temptations, trials, and sufferings which had befallen His Apostles on account of their being His disciples, and which, therefore, He speaks of and regards at all times as His own *temptations*. For so has He declared, *He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of Mine eye* ; and when Paul was arrested on his way to Damascus, with letters from the high priest to bind the servants of Christ, He called to him out of heaven, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?* thus asserting that the persecutions of His servants are His own persecutions : for the rule in His kingdom is, *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me*.

Matt. xxiv.
47.Luke xii. 32.
2 Cor. i. 7.
2 Tim. ii. 12.

(29) *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me :*

I appoint : I will give unto you a kingdom in the next

¹ “Commendat hic Dominus Apostolos de perseverantia. Bonus est ille amicus, qui in tentatione perseverat : boni amici est non peccare propter amicum, et libenter pœnas ferre propter ipsum. Multos invenies qui propter se commutent multa peccata qui, si te

viderint indigentem, nec unum obolum darent. Adam non fuit bonus amicus erga conjugem suam, qui voluit peccare propter ipsam, et tamen noluit pœnas subire propter eam sed injecit illi culpam.”—Stella.

world, and, therefore, all such contentions as these for primacy here on earth are but acts of folly and sin. Nothing indeed is more efficacious in keeping Christians from worldly ambition than the remembrance of the glorious promises of the Father. All things here are, indeed, unworthy of him to whom God has promised treasures in heaven, and for whom He has appointed a glorious and eternal kingdom. For they, and they only, who endure the threefold temptations of this life, have this promise that they shall hereafter receive a kingdom. Luca Brug.

I appoint unto you. Here, while speaking of the temptations to which He had submitted by becoming man, our Blessed Lord at the same time asserts His Divinity. It is He who appoints to the Apostles this kingdom. It is He who gives it by that testament which He was about to seal with His blood. And that which He appoints to them is not merely a place in the kingdom of God which He here assigns to His Apostles,—such as He gave to the penitent thief, such as He gives to all His faithful members; what is conferred here is rule in that kingdom, power and authority in His Church, so that by their acts and writings the Apostles may possess and exercise authority therein. And let us note the antithesis: *You have continued with Me in My temptations*; therefore, as the crown and reward for your perseverance, I give to you authority in My Church, which shall continue for ever. For, like as with all God's gifts to man, Christ promises a great and eternal reward for the feeble and imperfect efforts of His Apostles. Alex. Nat. Maldonatus.

And the kingdom or rule which Christ gives to His Apostles is like that which His Father had given Him; not an equal kingdom or power, but a similar one. It is like— Sylvira.

(1) Not such an one as the Apostles still expected, not an earthly one; but a heavenly and spiritual one, such as His was. Whitby.

(2) As the Father had given to the Son this kingdom, the right to rule and judge, because of His humiliation and suffering—for it was through the incarnation of Christ, because He *made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of*

¹ “*Ego dispono vobis, sicut disposuit Mihi Pater Meus regnum. Disposuit regnum Pater Christo Domino secundum carnem patienti, sicut et Ipse dixit, Oportuit pati Christum, et ita intrare gloriam Suam* [Luc. xxiv. 26]. Dispositione igitur hac disposuit Christus

Dominus etiam Apostolis regnum. Quod et beatus Apostolus Paulus postea, Act. xiv. 22, Antiochiæ discipulis manifestavit, dicens. *Quoniam per multas tribulationes oportet nos intrare in regnum Dei.*”—Soares.

Phil. ii. 7, 9.
Corn. & Lap.

men, that God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth — so does the Son give to those who have endured sufferings and have borne the cross after Him.

Sylveira.

Here is the same law manifested which our Blessed Lord pointed out when the two sons of Zebedee petitioned for the chief places of honour in His kingdom. It is the prize for those who are faithful on earth, and having endured trials here have been found meet for the inheritance of the saints in heaven. It is not given to those who act merely, but to those who purify themselves as He is pure; who humble themselves as He did; and who struggle against temptations, and at length obtain the victory.

Ps. xlix. 14.
Wind. iii. 8.
Matt. viii. 11;
xix. 28.
Luke xiv. 15.
1 Cor. vi. 2.
Rev. ii. 26;
iii. 21;
xix. 9.

(30) *That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Jansen Yp.

Even in promising His Apostles eternal joy, our Blessed Lord still keeps before their eyes the lesson of humility which He had just inculcated. It is deep joy, it is eternal happiness, that they are to sit with Him; not standing apart as servants, but sharing that glory into which He was about to re-enter.¹ It is a fruitful lesson of his humility, that He should condescend to make them partakers of that glory and sharers in that rest.

Matt. v. 6.

Bede.

By the word *table* Christ promises the glory of eternal life; in the meat and drink He points to that fulness of joy and satisfaction which He elsewhere promises to those who *hunger and thirst after righteousness*. For in that kingdom all shall be filled with that true good for which they have longed, however feebly and imperfectly, in this life. Heavenly joy, spiritual food, is that banquet to which the saints of God shall be admitted in the eternal kingdom of the Father — *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but right-*

¹ "Idem hoc in loco mihi videtur Christus discipulis dicere quod alibi Paulus Corinthiis suis: *Itaque, fratres mei dilecti, stabiles estote et immobiles, abundantes in opere Domini, semper scientes quod labor vester non est inanis in Domino* [1 Cor. xv. 58]. Neque ex his Domini verbis conjectandum est, quasi in regno Dei humano more Apos-

toli sint, vel comesturi, vel in thronis sessuri; sed sub involucro sermonis subindicare voluit Christus, bonos Apostolos Suo præmio nunquam esse fraudandos. Allusit autem ad mores regum, qui quos habent amicissimos et fidelissimos, illos etiam adesse volunt suis mensis et suis consiliis."—Hofmeister.

~~...and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost—where the Rom. xiv. 17.~~

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[TURN OVER.]

...in the kingdom of God is undoubtedly correct, and likewise expressed in Christ's words in the New

spirit."—*Olafsen on the Gospels and Acts*.

. "O Lord, who didst suffer Thy servant St. Bartholomew to be slain for Thy sake, and didst make him patiently and courageously to suffer his death and endure the torture, give me the spirit of Thine holy Apostle, for Thy cause and a good conscience sake to suffer what Thou dost appoint, rather than deny Thee or disclaim it, that my name may be writ in heaven and read

in Thy Church, and, above all, that my soul at my last hour may be received into heaven, and my body at Thy last day may rise and come to my soul, and both live blessed with Thee for ever; through His merits whose skin was torn, and flesh gored, and blood shed for me and my salvation, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."—*Dean Brough.*

ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE.

ST. MATTHEW IX. 9—13.

(9) *And as Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man, named Matthew, sitting¹ at the receipt of custom: and He saith unto him, Follow Me. And he arose and followed Him.*

Mark II. 13,
14.
Luke v. 27,
28.

THIS call of St. Matthew to be an Apostle of Christ took place immediately after our Blessed Lord had healed the paralytic man, as He *passed forth from thence*. Both St. Mark and St. Luke note the connexion of the call of St. Matthew with the healing of this man. After Christ had performed this miracle He went to the sea-side, where the crowd of persons was the greatest. To Him, as St. Mark tells us, came great multitudes to see and to listen to His words, and there He taught them. The whole life of Christ on earth was spent in a ceaseless round of acts of mercy. No time was suffered to intervene between His miracles. He passes from one manifestation of His Almighty power and love for man to another similar act; at one moment healing the bodies of those who were diseased, at another time ministering to the more terrible and hopeless disease

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

¹ "The people of this country *sit* at all kinds of work. The carpenter saws, planes, and hews with the hand-adze sitting on the ground or upon the plank he is planing. The washerwoman *sits* by the tub; and, in a word, no one stands when it is possible to sit. Shopkeepers always sit; and Levi *sitting* at the receipt of custom, is the exact way to state the case."—*Thomson, the Land and the Book*.

"The publicans had houses or booths built for them, at the gates of bridges, at the mouths of rivers, and by the sea-shore, where they took toll of

passengers that went to and fro: hence we read of bridges being made to take toll at, and of publicans living at the water-side, and of the tickets, or dials, of the publicans; which when a man had paid toll on one side of a river, were given him by the publican to show to him that sat on the other side, that it might appear that he had paid: in which was written two great letters, bigger than those in common use. (Jarchi, Maimonides, and Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 8, § 2, and Gloss. in Talm. Bab. Bechorat, fol. 30—2)." — *Gill*.

Chrysostom.

of the soul.¹ And yet here, as in other instances, where several acts of mercy are recorded by the Evangelists to have taken place at one time, we may remark a certain gradation in our Blessed Lord's deeds of mercy. Thus He had already shown His power over the bodies of men by healing the paralytic, and over the souls of men in the forgiveness of their sins; and now, when He had shown His mercifulness in both these instances, He manifested His power over the heart of man by calling a publican to be His Apostle; giving first the sign of His Divine power in the forgiveness of sins, lest the people should be offended at the call of one who was reckoned by them amongst sinners, unless He should have first given them the assurance that He had power to remove and forgive sins.² It is from putting out of sight this fact of the many miracles which had already been wrought at Capernaum, in the very sight of Matthew, that early opponents of Christianity, such as Porphyry and Julian, have charged this Apostle with light-mindedness and credulity in giving up his worldly calling and in following Christ at a word. The miracles which preceded the spoken word of the Saviour were so many calls preparing Matthew readily to obey the command of Christ, *Follow Me*.

Euthymius.

Jerome.

The account of the conversion of St. Matthew is placed in the midst of the miracles of our Blessed Lord, as though to show us that the conversion of a sinner, the repentance of a man entangled in the corrupting pursuits of the world, is a real miracle of Divine grace. Indeed physical miracles are powerless of themselves to draw man from his evil ways. So far from this, they may become to him as the plagues of Egypt were to Pharaoh, but so many occasions for deeper hardness of heart. Conversion does not neces-

¹ "Mirabilem profectò ostendit potentiam Suam Dominus noster cùm prope Capharnum ad mare Tiberiadis transiens, et vectigal pendere jussus, Petrum ad mare misit, jubens ut hamum mitteret, et eum qui primus ascenderit piscis tolleret, stateremque illum quem piscis ore gestaret sumeret et pro vectigali penderet. Mirabilem, inquam, in hoc facto ostendit Dominus potentiam suam. Sed longe mirabiliorem ostendit Dominus potentiam Suam in hoc Evangelio et in simili fere negotio. Cum enim à Capharnaò descenderet ad idem mare Tiberiadis, statim offendit et vidit hominem sedentem in telonio,

Matthæum: ecce piscem argento plenum. Misit igitur hamum cùm unicam emisit vocem, *Sequere Me*; et statim cepit hunc piscem: quodque mirabilis est, aurum et argentum, quod in magna copia piscis hic in ventre gesserat, mirabili vi extraxit, ita ut ipsemet Matthæus id expueret, relinqueret, et contemneret, adeoque in posterum nil nisi Christum in ore gereret, qui prius nil nisi aurum et argentum gerebat."—*Matt. Faber*.

² "Sanato corporali paralytico, sanat etiam spiritualiter paralyticum, qui non habebat manus ad subventionem pauperum sed ad rapinam et ad fraudem."—*Hofmeister in Lucam*.

sarily follow from a miracle ; rather it is to be classed with this conversion of St. Matthew amongst the truest miracles and evidences of Divine favour.¹ Sylveira.

As Jesus passed forth from thence. How vivid an idea do these words give us of our Blessed Lord's life on earth ! The Divine love, which was His own nature, led Him out of Himself, from that humanity which was full of man's weakness ; so that, forgetful as it were of all else and of Himself, He cared only for the wants of those who needed His healing hand.² He *passed forth* through man's cities, through the streets thronged by man, by the houses of those who lightly regarded and who hated Him, in order to draw mankind to Himself by the magnet of His own love. In doing so *He saw* not merely with the eyes of the body, but also with those of His Divinity ; *saw* not only outwardly, but with the tender sympathy of His soul. He *saw* Matthew at this time not merely as he saw the crowd of Scribes and Pharisees, but as He regarded Peter when He looked on him, and gave him the spirit of fear, so that, touched by sorrow for his great sin, *he went out and wept bitterly*. He looked on Matthew with a look which drew him to the side of His Master and his God. *He saw a man, named Matthew*. There is meaning and emphasis in this word *man* ; it was not Matthew, but a man that He looked on. It was nothing in his condition nor his calling which drew the eyes of the Saviour to him, but only this—that he was one of that race whom He had come to save, that he was a *man*. For so is it at all times when He regards with an eye of love those who need His help, and know that they need it ; it is not their merits nor their station which He sees, but only this—that they are His offspring and the creatures of His hand, that they are men. Dion. Carth. Ludolph. Chrysologus. Isa. xl. 2. Luke xlii. 64. Avendaño. Sylveira.

It has just been said that the eye with which Christ regarded Matthew was not merely that of His human body, but also that of His Divine nature. From the creation of

¹ “Quæres cur Matthæus in hoc cap., ubi varia miracula refert Christi Domini, suam narret conversionem ? Respondet glossa in catena : ‘Matthæus vocationem suam refert inter miracula ; magnum enim miraculum fuit quod publicanus factus est Apostolus.’ In hoc capite prosequitur Evangelista Christi Domini miracula ad ostendendam Ejus divinitatem ; quibus interserit suam conversionem, ut denotaret eam non minus esse miraculum quam omnia alia quæ de Magistro refert.

Magnum miraculum est conversio peccatoris.”—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione*.

² “As Jacob's hand holds Esau's heel, so doth our Saviour's cares and labours ; for as soon as the miracle is wrought and ended, another work begins, without any intermission, and that for our example and instruction ; that from thence we might learn, that a Christian's life is a constant labour [Gal. v. 7, vi. 10 ; and 2 Thesa. iii. 13].”—*Ward on St. Matthew*.

the world He has ever looked upon man with this latter ; but, when He took to Himself our flesh, He beheld man from that moment also with the eyes of a man ; not ceasing to regard him with the eye of Divine wisdom and love, but looking upon him also with human sympathy.¹

Barradius.

The other Evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke, speak of this Apostle by His other name—Levi. He, himself, however, only makes use of that name by which he is known amongst the Apostles of Christ—Matthew. Either he had two names, as some have supposed, or, as is most likely, and as the best commentatators hold, our Blessed Lord changed his name from Levi to Matthew when He called him from *the receipt of custom*, as He had before changed the name of another of His Apostles from Simon to Peter ; changing the names of those whose mode of life He changed when He called them to follow Him.² St. Matthew, again, in the list which he gives of the twelve Apostles of Christ, speaks of himself by this name, and adds what others do not—that he was a *publican*—recording, as it would seem, in humiliation, his former disreputable calling, and at the same time affording to all an instance of Christ's condescension and mercy, who would call even from the bosom of sin those who were to be made the vessels of grace and the ministers of His Gospel.³

Tostatus.
Jans Gand.
Metaphras-
tes
Aven laño.

Matt. x. 3.

Ferus.

So far as Christ was concerned, it was no accidental passing forth ; but He went for this very object, that He might call Matthew to follow Him,⁴ as at the first He came into the world to call sinners from their wickedness to follow Him. *He saith unto him, Follow Me.* So great was the power of our Blessed Lord's word that it was able at another time to call the dead from the sepulchre, and to give the body new life ; to bid the winds and the waves be still, so that there was a great calm. And if the same word when spoken had

Bonaven-
tura.

¹ “Vidit hominem, ut peccata hominis non videret. Vidit opus Suum, ut despiceret opera peccatorum. Vidit illum Deus, ut ille videret Deum. Vidit illum Christus, ut ille pecuniæ latebras amplius non videret.”—*P. Chrysologus.*

² “Matthæus fuit vocatus post assumptionem in discipulum : ita enim quibusdam nomina addita sunt, ut Simon vocatus est à Christo Cephas, Jo. i. 42 ; et sic forte tunc istum vocavit Matth. : et ista videtur esse causa quare postea in nullo loco Sacræ Scripturæ, nec etiam apud scriptores, vocatur Levi, sed solum Matthæus, scilicet, quia non

licebat aliter eum nominare, nisi sicut Christus nominaverat, potissimè quia ipse rejecerat illud nomen vetus, Levi.” —*Tostatus.*

³ “Alii appellant eum Levi ad servandum honorem ejus, ut non noscatur ille esse peccator : sed ipse vocat se Matthæum, quia justus in principio accusator est sui, dans intelligere quod Dominus non est acceptor personarum.” —*Th. Aquinas.*

⁴ “*Exiit*, quidem, ut requirat : *videt* ut attrahat : *vocat* ut ad Se convertat.” —*Bonaventura.*

this power to put away disease and sickness, it was no marvel to find that He was able to draw men to Him by His living and life-giving word. For as Christ saw Matthew with the eyes with which He regards the whole world—the eye of Godhead, and also with His human eye—so He called him not only by outward speech, but by inward influence.¹

When *the voice of the Lord is upon the waters* of this world of sin, *the voice of the Lord is indeed powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty*. And He called Matthew from the table of the publican not only to *follow* Him by his bodily action, but also to copy the example which He would set him; to *follow* Him in all holiness of life, to *follow* Him from worldly prosperity to sufferings and to poverty, to *follow* Him from death to life by trampling on the world and reaching towards heavenly things. In this light did St. Matthew understand the call of his Divine Master. Though, in his Gospel, he omits those circumstances which conduced to his own praise and commendation, yet St. Luke tells us that *he left all* when he *followed* Christ, giving up both the gains and the temptations of his old calling that he might follow Christ without distraction.² In this way did he understand the meaning of his Lord's words bidding him *follow* Him, since to follow means to imitate; and Matthew was called upon to imitate Him who, for our sakes, had become poor, *that we through His poverty might be rich*, and who had forsaken the glory of heaven for the indignities and the sufferings of earth. Thus did Matthew forsake all that he might truly follow, might imitate, Christ.

In this call of St. Matthew we have a lively picture of God's call to us, and the way in which we should obey that call.

(1) He sees us, He looks on us, regarding us with an eye of mercy, and by that look moving us to see Him.

(2) He calls us from the midst of our sins, from the occupations of the world, its cares and its delights.³ He does so

¹ "Christus vocali verbo vocat ad Evangelium ut commendet nobis etiam externum verbum. Significaturque hac externa vocatione et interna, quod vox Christi vocantis sit internæ vocationis indicium. Nullus enim, quantumlibet extrinsecus commonefaciat, Christum sequetur, nisi primùm intus à Sancto Spiritu illustretur et excitetur."—*Guilielmus*.

² "Ita erat humilitatis studiosus, ut inter omnes Evangelistas ipse se dicat

publicanum, *Matthæus publicanus* [Matt. x. 3]; ubi se post Thomam nominat, cùm tamen Lucas, vi. 15, in catalogo Apostolorum Matthæum ante Thomam scribat. At noster Evangelista ob suam humilitatem in suo Evangelio sibi inferiorem locum eligit."—*Sylveira*.

³ "D. Thoma ait: 'Vidit hominem in telonio—id est, in statu in quo vivere vix sine peccato posset.' Igitur administratio telonii non erat intrinsecè

Estius.

Ps. xxix. 3, 4.
Coppenstein.

Tostatus.

Ludov.
Granat.
Luke v. 28.

Basil.

2 Cor. viii. 9.
Bede.

by various means, as the summons by which He called His Apostles was not one, but various ; by various means and at divers times.

(3) He enables us to rise up and tear ourselves from those pursuits which hinder our obedience, and separate us from our Maker ; and as we strive to obey His call He gives us strength to perform what He wills. In the predestination of Divine grace He sees us before we see Him, He draws near to us before we draw near to Him, and loves us with infinite love before we love Him, and calls us before we seek Him—nay, if we seek Him, we do so only because He has called us—and gives us the will and the strength to seek and to follow Him.¹ In the vocation wherewith He calls us He bids us follow Him, and tread in His footsteps. And we rise up from our sins, and attain to newness of life, through that justification which is given us because of His resurrection. So that God's call, who is ever calling us, and our desire, are both necessary to our salvation.²

Stella in
Lucam.

Ferus.

1 Sam. xiv.
52.

John xviii.
36.

When Saul chose his attendants, we read that *when he saw any strong man or any valiant man, he took him unto him*. In this he followed the practice of the world and the dictates of human prudence. But when Christ chose those who should follow Him, He whose *kingdom is not of this world* called not Annas and Caiaphas, and the learned and powerful in human wisdom, to follow Him, but men of little repute, men unlettered and of lowly callings : publicans, as St. Matthew ; fishermen, as Peter and James and John. He did so—

1 Cor. i. 27.

Beaux Amis.

(1) That by *the weak things of the world* He might *confound the mighty*, and that the establishment of His Church might be clearly seen to be the work not of men, but of God only.

Ward.

(2) That the poorest and meanest of men might never despair of being partakers of His mercy, since it was such as they, and not the high in station nor the wise in learning, who were called to be His first disciples, and the messengers and stewards of His Gospel.

peccaminosa ; sed magnum labendi periculum in se habet.”—*Emmanuale ab Incarnatione*.

¹ “ Sæpius sanctis inspirationibus nos vocat, pulsat, et quærit, inquiens, *Aperi mihi, sponsa mea, columba mea, soror mea* [Cant. v. 2]. Et iterum, *Solve vincula colli tui, captiva filia Sion* [Isa. iii. 2]. Non possumus ad Deum ire, nisi Ipse prius ad nos venerit

et nos vocaverit.”—*Stella in Lucam*.

² “ Duabus clavibus cœli porta aperitur ; unam habet Deus, alteram homo. Duabus alis sursum volatur, unam supeditat Deus, alteram habet homo, duo portant electæ terræ botrum. Deus præit, homo sequatur. Ad scalam Jacob duo sunt : Deus cui innititur et homo.”—*Hartung*.

Our Blessed Lord did not call Matthew to be an Apostle at the same time that He called Peter and James and John, though He called him from the same place,¹ and though he had witnessed the same miracles which they had seen. It may be that the hardening effect of his profession, the occupation with worldly riches, hindered him from acknowledging the truth of Christ's teaching so soon as they did, or that his calling, with the evil repute which clave to it, made him shrink from openly following Christ, and caused him to doubt whether He would receive such as he was into the number of His disciples.

Salmeron.

As Christ called St. Matthew, he was passing forth. There was no time for delay, no prospect that He would call again, nor that He would give Matthew a second opportunity of following Him.² Let us remember—

Paschasius.

(1) That so long as we are in this world, Christ is ever passing by, calling us in divers ways—by reasonings, by unforeseen accidents, by the voice of conscience, and by sudden impulses—to follow Him; whilst His various deeds of mercy, the actions of His providence, and the testimony of His Church, are so many means by which we are prepared to hear and obey that call.

(2) Christ first calls us to Him—it is not we who turn to Him uncalled; so that when we desire to obey Him we may not doubt of His readiness to receive us, since the desire to obey is not from ourselves, it is His call to us; and those whom He calls He will accept.

(3) Let us learn from the example of Matthew promptly to obey Christ's call, even to the giving up everything which may hinder us from being perfectly obedient to Him, even though we leave all things in order to *follow Him*, and though—which is harder than the giving up of our worldly possessions and friends—we surrender our will to Him who procured us power so to do when He prayed, *Not My will, but Thine, be done.*

Matt. Faber.
Luke xxii.
42.

(10) *And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners³ came and sat down with Him and His disciples.*

Mark ii. 15.
Luke v. 29.

¹ "Juxta mare Matthæum quærit; ut quoniam alios Apostolos, Petrum et Andreæ, ex conchimaribus tanquam gemmas eduxit, sic et cum Matthæo se haberet, ex procelloso sæculo eum ad se trahens, ut una ex duodecim gemmis ex quibus et fundamenta et muri sanctæ civitatis Hierusalem constare debebant

fieret."—*Avendaño.*

² "Notandum quòd transiens eum videt et vocat, ad hoc quippe, ut et Ipse de hoc sæculo transiens ad æterna quantumocius festinet."—*Paschasius.*

³ "In Jewish writings publicans are ranked with sinners, and those of the worst sort: so false swearing was

Luke v. 29.

Avendaño.

Beaux Amis.

Hofmeister
in Lucam.

Corn. & Lap.

Chrysologus.

The other two Evangelists who record this call of St. Matthew both inform us that this feast, which St. Luke tells us was a *great feast*,—*great* because there were so *many* there to whom Christ came as the messenger of salvation,¹—was made by St. Matthew in his own house.² He himself, however, only speaks of the *house*, without specifying whose it was.

It was fitting that he who was about to be an Apostle of Christ, and as an Evangelist was to be the teacher of the whole Christian world, should begin this office by inviting his brother publicans and others to sit down with Christ, and to listen to His teaching. The publican showed at once his readiness for the apostolic vocation into which he had now entered, by calling others who knew not Christ to come and sit down with Him. This, indeed, is the mark of true conversion to God; the desire to make others share in the blessings which we have received, and to do for our companions and neighbours that which Matthew did for his.³ It was fitting, moreover, according to the economy of salvation, that the Life should sit down at the banquet with those who were dead in trespasses and sins, that so He might by that mark of His love and of His true humanity show Himself the *friend of publicans and sinners*, and thus allure those to whom He was about to offer pardon.

The feast which Matthew made in his house was at once a sign and symbol of that joy which he felt at the call of Christ,⁴ and a type and image of that feast to which he

allowed to be made to murderers, and to robbers, and to publicans (*Mis. Nedarim*, c. 3, § 4); and so publicans and thieves are joined together by Maimonides (*Hilch. Gezela*, c. 5, § 9, 11); and a publican is said by him to be as a thief. And indeed that was not only the sense of the Jews, but also of other people, according to those words of Zeno the poet, πάντες τελῶναι πάντες εἰσὶν ἀρπάγες. All publicans are all of them robbers: though this was not originally their character."—*Gill*.

¹ "Semel benè conviviatur fuisse Dominum lego Lucæ v. 29, quando Matthæum convertit, fecit ei convivium magnum Levi in domo et erat turba multa publicanorum. Comederat Dominus alibi, sed nullum additur convivium magnum fuisse quia nullibi fuerat turba multa publicanorum, hoc est, ferculorum Christi."—*Hartung in Dom. iii. post Pentecost, concio civica*.

² "Ex hoc, quòd Matthæus et domum propriam habebat, et fecit Ei convivium magnum proprio sumptu, patet quòd quando dictum est *relictis omnibus*, sermo fuit non de rebus sed de egotiiis."—*Cajetan*.

³ "Clarum et apertum signum est quod Deum audieris si cum proximis charitate incipias uti. Amor quippe divinus otiosus non est, ubicunque est operatur. Nam quemadmodum ignis non potest in sinu esse sine eo quod restes comburat [Prov. vi. 27], ita ignis divini amoris non potest esse in corde hominis et frigidum hominem in operibus esse." *Stella in Lucam*.

⁴ "Convivium instituebant veteres in die natali suo, quòd eo die nati lucem aspexerint; uti Pharao Gen. xl. 20, et Herodes Marc. vi. 21. Multò rectius fecit Matthæus convivium in die quo spiritualiter renatus est et filius Dei factus."—*Matt. Faber*.

should afterwards be admitted by his Lord. To this earthly feast Christ came in order that He might enable those who came to Him in the house of Matthew to share hereafter in the heavenly feast in His Father's house, to which He is ever inviting mankind. By coming to this earthly feast and sitting down with the rest of the guests at the table of Matthew, our Blessed Lord taught us—

Guilland.

Chrysologus.

(1) The efficacy of Divine grace, which could draw men to Him, even by that means which so often causes men to fall away from God—the banquets of earth.

(2) The reality of the hypostatic union of the two natures of God and man in His own person; in that whilst as man He sat at an earthly table, and shared in the feasting of men, He at the same time manifested a grace which was above man, which was Divine. For in drawing sinners to Himself and causing them to desert their former mode of life, He gave them that grace which none but God can give, and enabled them henceforth to follow Him.

Sylvira.

The example of Christ's condescension to one man was the means of attracting to Him *many publicans and sinners*. For the same reason it is that we have the record of this and many similar acts of love and mercy to sinners. Every deed of love to others is a call and declaration of His love and mercy to the whole of mankind, and so to us. Let us not, then, wonder when we see Him sitting at meat even with *publicans and sinners*, nor cavil, as these Pharisees did, at this act of condescension. We know that He came for these ends—to give Himself as an example to sinners by His life, and to redeem them by His death. It is no marvel, then, that He took bread with sinners, who came to give Himself as the bread of men's souls; no marvel that He drank in the company of *publicans and sinners*, who was about to give His blood to be poured out for them, to be the cleansing flood and the healing wine for the souls of all sinners. As on the cross He willed to hang between two thieves and to save one of them; as the Father in His tenderness comes forth from His house to embrace and to restore one prodigal son; so does He here go into the company of many *publicans* and sit down with many *sinners*, that so He might call *publicans* to Him and put away the iniquity of many *sinners*.¹ Unlike the Scribes and Pharisees

De Cassia.

Chrysostom.

Paulus de Palacio.

¹ "Ecce præfert formam, Jesus divertit ad unum publicanum et peccatorem, et multos ex uno trahit, et ad Se venire invitat, incentivum cunctis tribuens veniendi. Recipit ad verbum, recipit ad discubitus; sed nec mirum, si eos

venatur ad æternum regnum. Ostendit Se domesticum, divinè humanum, et humanè divinum. Rapit animas cunctorum rectè non æmulè intendentium in Eum amore et delectatione sui."—*Simon de Cassia*.

Matt. xxiii.
15.

who accused Him of companionship with sinners, and who compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, He at one banquet invited many to follow Him, and called many to sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven.

Luca Brug.

Publicans and sinners. Some have understood these words to mean publicans who are sinners; but the words would seem to imply two distinct classes—the former, the tax-collectors, so odious to the Jews because of their exactions; the latter, it may be, persons of known evil lives—persons who had cast off the observance of the Jewish law, and were living dissolutely and as Gentiles.

The objects for which Christ came to this feast seem to have been these—

(1) He would give an opportunity to *many* of the friends and companions of Matthew, *many publicans and sinners*, to hear His teaching.

(2) He would give those who were present, and others through them, a memorable instance of condescension, and thus encourage sinners to come to Him, by showing that He would never shrink from their company.

Tostatus.

(3) He left behind Him a lesson for all time, and for all persons in His Church; teaching them that it is right to hold intercourse with sinners in all offices of necessity and charity, provided only that we abstain from being partakers in their wickedness and from approving their sin.

The history of the conversion of St. Matthew affords an example to all penitents in these particulars—

(1) As soon as he was called he *arose*, as the sinner must from his sins in which he is resting.

(2) He *followed* Christ. In vain shall we cast off old sins unless we use the strength which God gives us actively to follow our Lord.

(3) As Matthew showed his thankfulness to Christ by the feast which he prepared for Him, so must we by all our actions manifest our gratitude and thankfulness to God for His mercy in calling us from our sins.

John i. 41.

(4) As Matthew called his companions to the banquet with Christ; as Andrew, when called to follow Him, brought with him *his own brother Simon*, so shall we, if we are really obedient to the heavenly call, bring others to sit with us at the feet of Christ, to follow Him, and to be His disciples.

Stella in
Lucam.

Matthew, let us note, first followed the call of Christ, and then our Blessed Lord came into his house and sat down with Him.¹ So does He still. He first moves us to pray,

¹ “Matthæum unicum ex Apostolis in domum suam et Illum ad legimus in conversione excepisse Do- convivium invitasse. In domum tamen

and then gives us in reward that which He has enabled us really to pray for—His own presence. *Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.* Ferna.
Rev. iii. 20.

(11) *And when the Pharisees saw it they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?* Matt. xi. 10.
Luke v. 30;
xv. 2.
John iv. 9.
Acts x. 28.
1 Cor. v. 11.
Gal. ii. 15.

Thus it is that the same opportunities, the same call, the same strivings of the Holy Spirit, are made by one man the occasion of drawing closer to the Saviour, and by others the very means by which the heart is hardened. At the feast which St. Matthew gave, in joy because of the call of Christ, many publicans and sinners came to listen to His teaching; whilst to the Pharisees at the same feast it became the occasion of fresh accusations against Christ.¹ So was it at the grave of Lazarus. *Many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed in Him.* Of others, however, who had witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus and the power of Christ, we read, *That from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death.* Matt. Faber.
John xi. 45.
John xi. 53.

St. Luke tells us that this cavilling of the Pharisees was not only at what Christ was doing, but that it extended also to His disciples.² *Why eateth your Master?* says St. Matthew: *Why do ye eat?* again are the words of St. Luke. They blamed the disciples for imitating the example of Christ. And this question which they asked, captious as it was, was not addressed to our Blessed Lord Himself, but to His disciples—either, it may be, in order to instil doubt Luca Brug,

Petri legimus introisse, et socru sanata Petri, illam Domino ministrasse. Cæterum in conversione beatus Matth., unicus in hoc inter cæteros Apostolos, convivium Domino apparavit in domo sua.”—*Soarez.*

¹ Though, as we learn from St. Mark and St. Luke, the Scribes were with the Pharisees on this occasion, yet judging from the language of St. Matthew, who makes mention only of the Pharisees, it would seem that the accusation against Christ was wholly, or at least mainly, theirs. There might have been in their mind the injunction in Proverbs xxiii. 6. “It is worth our observing, that whereas both the Scribes

and Pharisees sought to fasten accusations upon our Saviour (Matt. ix. : the Scribes accused him of blasphemy, ver. 3; the Pharisees of eating with publicans and sinners, ver. 11), the Scribes’ accusation was a breach of the law; the Pharisees’ a breach of tradition.”—*Goodwyn’s Moses and Aaron*, lib. i. c. vi.

² “Quare cum peccatoribus et publicanis manducat et bibit Magister vester, quem vos, deserto Joanne, ut sanctiorem sequimini peccatorum conviva est, cum mensæ communio summæ familiaritatis, sit indicium?”—*Hofmeister in Marcum*,

Sylveira.

Emm. ab
Incarnat."Vain men,"
Eng. Ver.
Judges xi. 3.

Luke xiv. 21.

1 Sam. xxli.
2.1 Sam. xxli.
2.
Avendaño.

into the minds of His Apostles of the holiness of their Master, and so to draw them away from Him, or because they had already sufficiently experienced His wisdom in replying to their cavils, and were unwilling again to draw on themselves His stern rebuke.¹

When the Pharisees, the priests, and the Scribes, the rulers of the people, and the mass of the Jewish nation, deliberately rejected our Blessed Lord, He turned to the publicans and sinners, and, through His Apostles, to the Gentile world, and called them to share in the feast which He had prepared for all mankind. Thus when Jephthah, who delivered Israel from the children of Ammon, and was so far forth a type of Christ, was driven from his father's house, he turned to the poor, and to those who were of little repute, and made them his companions. So, again, when those who were the brethren of Christ as being equally with Him, according to the flesh, of the seed of Abraham, refused to have Him to reign over them, He drew around Him the poor and those who knew that they were sinners—the halt and the blind of the parable—and these followed Him, and He became their Leader and their Redeemer. Thus did Zacchæus follow Him, and Matthew, both of whom were publicans. Thus did the sinful woman follow closely His footsteps and stand under His cross. Again, when David, the forefather of the Messiah according to the flesh, and the most perfect type of Christ, fled from the face of Saul, there were gathered to him *every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt*. So in the incarnate life of Christ on earth, those who felt their distress, who knew that they were in debt, who had become the bond-servants of Satan, and were oppressed by sorrow at the sight of their sinfulness, came to the Son of David, and *He became a Captain over them*, for they listened to and obeyed His will.

The Pharisees are always set before us as worthy of condemnation, because, through pride and self-reliance on their own goodness, they shrank from the company of their fellow-creatures.² There are, indeed, several reasons which may

¹ Οἱ Φαρισαῖοι εἶπον τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ. "Non dicunt Christo sed discipulis Ejus, et hoc clam et absconditè et ab ipso Domino, quia Ejus infinitam sapientiam timebant, quam multoties experti erant in suis calumniis repellendis. Unde discipulos petunt, tanquam adhuc rudes et parum paratos ad respondendum, ut ita, si fieri posset, eos à Magistro abducant et avertant."

Sylveira.

² "The Evangelist contrasts the conduct of our Saviour, in choosing a publican for an apostle, with that of the Pharisees, who would not even permit any intercourse with those unfortunate beings, whose hearts, notwithstanding their occupation in the world, were often filled with the noblest longings." *Olshausen on the Gospels and Acts.*

justly prompt men to avoid the company of sinners : reasons which are laudable, and approved by God. The various motives which prompt men to withdraw from the society of sinners are—

(1) A belief in their own superiority and greater goodness, leading them to say, in effect, as those of old, *Stand by thyself : come not near to me ; for I am holier than thou.* Isa. lxxv. 5. This, which is the effect of pride, is odious in God's sight, and condemned by the words and example of our Blessed Lord.

(2) Some men avoid the company of sinners from a distrust of their own steadfastness, a dread lest they themselves should be drawn into sin, knowing that they who touch pitch will be defiled by it, and fearing lest *with the froward* they should show themselves to be but *froward*. Ps. xviii. 26.

(3) Others do so lest they should seem to countenance evil, and should thereby confirm the sinner in his wickedness—abstaining from the society of evil men in order that sinners may cease from sin through shame at the tacit condemnation of their fellow-men. These latter motives are laudable in themselves, and, since they spring from a humble sense of the weakness of man, so far from being reproved by Him, they are acceptable in the sight of God. Th. Aquinas.

(12) *But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*

The words were spoken to *His disciples*, by whom, it may be, the cavil of the Pharisees was conveyed to Him. Or He, who on other occasions heard the whisperings of the heart, may have heard these words, though spoken apart.

The Pharisees had expressed surprise that Christ endured the company and had sat down to eat and to drink with sinners. He answers their objection to this by these considerations—

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

(1) These men were spiritually diseased—they were in truth, according to the accusation made against them, *sinners*—they therefore needed a physician who could heal them ; and it is the duty of a physician to attend upon the sick and to minister to their wants. Because, then, they were *publicans and sinners* they needed His presence and assistance, since He was the Physician for the souls of men.¹

¹ “Regula generalis est : medicus, tam corporis quam animæ, sanis, quamdiù sani sunt, non est necessarius ; unde in statu innocentie sicut nulla potestas

cogens fuisset, nullo existente peccato, nec ulla ars medicinæ fuisset, nullo existente morbo, quemadmodum non erit in statu gloriæ futuro. Sunt autem

He had come, as the good Samaritan, to bind up the wounds caused by sin—to pour in the oil and the wine by which the injuries caused by sin might be remedied.

(2) That the presence of Christ was not only in accordance with the nature of things, since it was congruous for the physician to visit the sick, but that it was beforehand declared, in those Scriptures by which these very cavillers professed to walk, that this should be a characteristic of the Messiah, and that He would prefer mercy to sacrifice; that He would exercise that mercy which would raise the sinner from death to life, and esteem all such deeds of mercy in others above the sacrifices which were but the outward manifestations of man's worship.

Cajetan.

(3) That the very end of His incarnation, the one object which had caused Him to come upon earth, was this—to call sinners, such as these men were, to repentance. That He did not come to call the just, if such there were, but the sinners of this world.

Avendaño.

The words which our Blessed Lord here uses are undoubtedly proverbial. He compares Himself to a physician, for He had come upon earth for this end, to heal the wounds caused by sin, and not, as He shall hereafter come at His second advent, to judge mankind. So that the Pharisees, in saying that the men in whose company He was were *sinners*, gave a sufficient reason why Christ should be with them, and why He should bear with their misery, and should even by His presence and answer to the cavil of the self-righteous, show Himself ready to be the physician of all who were spiritually diseased, that is, all sinners.

Cyril.

Barradius.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Commentators, in their remarks upon the words *they that be whole*, are divided in their opinions as to who are meant: who those are who *need not a physician*.

Hilary.
Jerome.
Bede.
Rab. Maurus.
Alb. Magnus.

(1) Some think that by these words are meant those who think themselves whole, who are not conscious of any need—the self-righteous—the Pharisees, proud of their observances of the ritual law. But this can hardly be the true sense of these words, since our Blessed Lord came to save all sinners, and the self-righteous are oftentimes but sinners of a deeper depravity than those who are outwardly evil.

(2) Others say that by the *whole* are meant the just, who,

isti tres status, infirmus, sanus, et neuter. Primo debetur curatio: secundo conservatio: tertio et postremo præservatio. Conservatio igitur in sanitate parta, vel præservatio à morbo futuro, quodammodo ad infirmitatem spectant, cum posse infirmari, seu in morbum recidere,

infirmitas nonnulla sit: ideoque qui tales sunt medico egent. Innuit ergo Christus his verbis Se missum ut medicum; eorum tamen qui se malè habere aut infirmari posse agnoscunt."—*Salméron*.

being in the way of righteousness, needed not that they should be called into the way of holiness, since it was only needful that they should be kept by Divine grace in that way. Not, that is, that Christ did not come to call them, since He called Nathanael, a just man, but that He came not to call them, as he summoned the rest, to *repentance* and the commencement of the work of holiness.

Chrysostom.
Sylveira.

John i. 43—
51.
Tostatus.

(3) Another interpretation of these words is, that Christ came not to call the just, since there are none such on earth, but that He came to call sinners—that is, all men—for *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*.

Theophylact.
Rom. iii. 23.

But let us note our Blessed Lord has here made use of a proverbial expression well known both to the Jews and Gentiles of old. He does not say that there are any who are whole, but He affirms that it is the very office of the physician to minister to, and be in the company of, *the sick*; so that it is out of place to discuss who are those who answer to the description *they that be whole* in this proverb.¹

In estimating the lawfulness or unlawfulness of communicating with sinners, it must be borne in mind that such intercourse and communion is twofold.

(1) We do so when we consent to their sins, when we help or in any way countenance them in the commission of that which is evil, and are *partakers of other men's sins*. This is wholly prohibited; of this even the Pharisees did not venture to accuse our Blessed Lord.

1 Tim. v. 22.

(2) We may communicate with sinners in things that are not sinful, but wholly indifferent, such as eating with them, and holding conversation with them. These kinds of communication are only forbidden us when, by reason of such intercourse, sinners are rendered bolder in their sins, or when the effect of our intercourse with them is, that we appear to be approvers of their evil deeds; or when there is danger to our own purity of becoming contaminated by the company of evil men. Intercourse, however, with sinners is not only lawful, but laudable, when maintained in order that sinners may be recalled from wickedness and led to repentance. For this latter reason it was that Christ was present at this feast, and sat down to eat and drink with *publicans and sinners*.

Toletus.

¹ "Proverbialis ea locutio est quam et Græcorum philosophi et alii scriptores Ethnici usurparunt. Sic Antisthenes, cum objectum illi esset quod cum improbis versaretur: 'Etiam,' in-

quit, 'medici cum ægrotis.' Et Diogenes rogatus cum Lacedæmoniorum laudaret instituta, cur non apud eos viveret: 'Medicus,' ait, 'inter sanos non commoratur.'"—*Alex. Natalis*.

ances of the law, of which sacrifice is one and the greatest, are of less value than such deeds of mercy as are prescribed to us by the natural law, which equally with the ritual law is from Him.¹ This is so—

Alex. Nat.

(1) Because the obligations of the natural law, which God has made a part of the very constitution of man, and of which law *mercy* is one element, even when they seem to clash with any of the commandments of the positive law, are yet superior to them.

(2) Because *mercy*, like the other obligations of the law of our nature, is perpetually binding upon us; but the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, which are here spoken of, were to cease with the ceremonial law. Again, mercy was a law from the first, but the law of sacrifice, since it was subsequent to this primal law of God, could not supersede it.

(3) Thus would God show the Jews that they were not justified by these sacrifices, but by faith and love, from which sources mercy proceeds.

(4) Thus also would God teach them and us that the sins of the world are not removed by any *sacrifice* merely considered in itself, but by the *mercy* of God alone.

Toletus.

He who offers is not accepted on account of his offering, but on account of the mind and intention with which his offering is accepted.² Thus, because of his evil heart, the offering of Cain was rejected, whilst that of his brother Abel was accepted. The altar which God requires is that of the true heart; the wood with which the sacrifice is to be offered are all holy thoughts and pure desires; the fire which must consume it is that of love. As of old the victim was to be offered up before the door of the tabernacle, and not within, so must our offering be made in the outer court, on the earth, to fit us for entry into the temple of God in heaven. The hand laid on the head of the victim is the type of the devotion and surrender of the will to God which is required in every true offering: the blood shed typifies the pouring out of all unholy desires: whilst the severing of the limbs of the victim is an expressive image of the mortification of self, and the cutting away of all that unites us to earth, and thereby separates us from God.

Salmeron.

Matt. Faber.

tores. Certum enim est, voluisse Deum etiam sacrificia; consuluisse etiam valentibus; vocasse etiam justos."—*Matt. Faber.*

¹ "But go ye and learn what is the meaning of that speech, Hos. vi. 6, I prefer acts of mercy and charity, especially spiritual, belonging to the rescuing and saving of souls, before ceremonies

even of the worship of God, such ritual laws as these, of not accompanying with a heathen or unclean person."—*Hammond's Paraphrase.*

² "Illud quod ab hominibus appellatur sacrificium, signum est veri sacrificii. Porro misericordia verum est sacrificium."—*Jo. Arboreus.*

Every deed by which we are drawn to God, and which has reference to Him as the final cause of all good actions, in whom alone we are able to find our highest good, is a true sacrifice. And above all other things, that *mercy* by which men, the creatures and children of God, are benefited, if wrought from the highest motive for God's sake, is the truest of all sacrifice. The *mercy*, therefore, by which the Good Shepherd compassionates sinners, and condescends to the necessities of the sheep of His fold, is that one and all-sufficient sacrifice which is acceptable in the eyes of the Father.¹

Alex. Nat.

We are thus taught—

(1) That in God's sight there is nothing so precious as acts of mercy towards our fellows. So much so is this the case, that even when a man comes to the altar of God and is about to offer his gifts, if he be not in perfect peace and charity with his brother-man, he is bidden by our Blessed Lord—God Himself—to leave his offering there unoffered, and to go and be reconciled to his brother before he makes his offering to God. So highly does our Maker esteem love and mercy amongst men. And amongst acts of mercy, more especially does He value those spiritual works of mercy which concern the souls of our fellow-men. But let us remember that outward observances of piety and mortification, without mercy and charity, are pharisaical, and not Christian.

Matt. v. 24.
25.
Euthymius.Luca Brug.
Alex. Nat.

(2) With reference to God Himself, we are taught that He desires to show mercy, and that He greatly prefers this to the death or sacrifice of the sinner; for His mercy is shown chiefly in this, that He forgives our sins, and desires not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live.²

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Gorrius.

*I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*³

¹ "Salvator Mundi non præmia justis
Solvere, nec sanis venit conferre
medelam,
Sed quod dispersum exciderat, frac-
tumque jacebat,
Quærere, et inventum reparare et
reddere curæ."

—S. Prosper, *Carm. de Ingratis*.

² See on this, Book ii. chap. 1 of *Butler's Analogy of Religion*.

³ The words *εἰς μετάνοιαν* are omitted in some MSS. and versions. The evidence for and against their genuineness is thus given by Mr. Forshall: "Rec C. E. G. K. L. M. S. U. X. cu¹²⁰.

Om. B. D. V¹ Δ. Σ. 1¹, 33², 209, 253, 338. Others: *Syr. syr. Œth. Arm. Goth. Ord. L. a. b. f. ff¹. h. l. Vulg. Orig.¹ Bas. Jer. Aug. Ambr. Lachm. Tisch. Treg. Alf.* The variants are altogether inadequate to justify any doubts as to the genuineness of the received text." Mr. Scrivener says: "These words are rejected both in Matthew and Mark by Griesbach and Lachmann, and in Mark alone by Vater and Scholz. . . . I am compelled to consider the evidence for the omission of *εἰς μετάνοιαν* insufficient. Scholz cites only twelve MSS.

In that He says *I am come*, our Blessed Lord intimates that His incarnation, His coming to the world, to mankind, was His own voluntary act. In that He says, *I come to call sinners*, let us note that Christ does not say that there are any just to whom He does not come, but only that if there were any who had sinned, He was sent to lead them to repentance. He came for this end, that is, to call the sinners, not the just:—

(1) For though He *came* for all men, yet He came not to those who resisted His call. He came not to those who, relying on their own righteousness, believed that they needed nothing from a Saviour—He came not to the Scribes and the Pharisees—but He came to the *publicans and sinners*, whether they were those who felt and acknowledged that they were sinners, or were so sunk in sin as to be unconscious of their need.¹

(2) He came not to the really just—to the angels of God, who are pure and holy, and who do His will perfectly—but He came to sinners and for sinners, in order that they might repent. Nor did He come to men who were just, if any such there were, since they could need no repentance, but only a building up and strengthening in that righteousness, to which, in God's mercy, they had attained. But,

(3) In truth, He came to the world to *call* all men to *repentance*, for all, whether they knew it or not, were sinners. All were sick, though some in their pride and self-sufficiency knew not of their infirmity, and desired not the presence of the physician.² Though many then thought, as many now think, themselves just, yet there are none such, *for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; for there are none that doeth good, no, not one.* So that He who came to call sinners and to call sinners only, came therefore to call all men; because all are sinners.³

which reject the clause, four of which contain it in the margin. They are nearly all of the Alexandrine class, and several of them too closely allied to be regarded with much confidence as separate witnesses. The few authorities in favour of expunging the words are easily counterbalanced by the testimony of the Sahidic version, of Chrysostom, and the vast majority of MSS. of both families which favour their authenticity." Fritzsche, who receives these words as genuine in his text, remarks: "Hæc vocabula, quæ ab haud paucis subsidiis excluduntur, ad argumentationem plane sunt necessaria." *Evangel.*

Matt. recensuit C. F. Augustus Fritzsche. Lipsiæ, 1826.

¹ "The Jews have a saying of shepherds, collectors of taxes, and publicans, that their repentance is difficult. Talm. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 94. 3."—*Gill.*

² "Ἐρχεσθαι—or, according to the more usual form, ἔρχεσθαι εἰς τὸν κόσμον—signifies the appearing on earth of one belonging to a higher order of things."—*Olshausen.*

³ Οὐ γὰρ ἦλθον καλεῖσαι.—"Id est, solum."—*Emman. Sd.* "Non veni vocare justitiæ persuasione inflatos."—*Mariana.*

Ward.

Ambrose.

Salmeron.

Bonaventura.

Theophylact.

Rom. iii. 23.

Ps. xiv. 3.

Beaux Amis.

Let those, then, who are weighed down by the sense of sin remember for their comfort that it was for them that their Saviour came, and that it is such as they whom He is ever calling to repentance. For these especially did He come from heaven. For these especially did He endure the humiliations of earth. For these especially did He take our nature upon Him. For these especially did He die upon the cross.

Rupertus.

. “Domine Jesu Christe, qui multis modis me vocas et admones ut sequar Te, Tu divina inspiratione cor meum accende, ut Te vocantem sequar Tua gratia; nec aliquid me separet à charitate Tua. Da mihi ut de sanctis cogitationibus, meditationibus, et affectionibus, bonisque operibus et virtutibus Tibi serviam, et convivium ex magna delectatione et devotione mentis exhibeam. Et qui misericordiam vis

potius quam sacrificium, et venisti vocare peccatores magis quam justos, præsta mihi misero peccatori, ut in me Tuam misericordiam merear clementer experiri. Amen.”—*Ludolph.*

“O Domine per infinitam tuam clementiam Te quæsumus, ut eos in orbem concionatores mittas qui meritò in pulpitis universæ plebi dicere possint, sequamini Me, et, imitatores mei estote, sicut ut Ego Christi.”—*Ph. Dies.*

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS.

ST. MATTHEW XVIII. 1—10.

(1) *At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?*

Matt. xx. 21.
Mark ix. 33.
Luke ix. 46;
xxii. 24.

THE strife and contention of the Apostles of Christ took place, as St. Mark tells us, *by the way*. When they came into the presence of their Master, He questioned them as to their disputation; and St. Matthew here records the answer—their strife was as to who should have the pre-eminence *in the kingdom of heaven*. This question was continually arising amongst them, and the spirit which led to this contention was always reprov'd by our Lord. It broke out more especially at such times when our Saviour spake of His approaching sufferings and death.¹ On this occasion it would seem to have followed closely upon His Transfiguration. The prospect of the rewards and glory of His kingdom seemed then to be presented more vividly to their minds, and they were doubly anxious to know who should possess the chief power and be *the greatest in the kingdom of heaven*; for though they thought it would be Divine in its character, that it would not be a kingdom of earth, but one of heaven, yet they expected it to resemble earthly kingdoms in this particular, and have its chief places of power and of dignity the same as the kingdoms of this world.² They had yet to be taught that the road to the honour of Christ's kingdom is that of humility.

Mark ix. 33.

Tostatus.

Lightfoot.
Hammond.

De Saci.

Jans. Gand.

¹ "Audientes Illum breve moriturum et resurrecturum, ac tunc Illum putantes regnaturum in terris, coeperunt hac occasione inter se disceptare qui primum in regno Ejus locum habiturus esset. Qua in re notandum, quanta sequabilitate Christus discipulos habuerit, ut licet Petrum et filios Zebedæi ad secreta quædam præ aliis admiserit,

nequaquam tamen inter eos constaret quem Dominus reliquis voluisset præstare, aut principem agere." — *Jansen. Gandavensis.*

² "Supra Dominus monstravit futuram gloriam in sua transfiguratione: hic de profectione ad illam gloriam agit. Per humilitatem pervenitur ad gloriam." — *Th. Aquinas.*

By some this contention is supposed to have been occasioned by the command of Christ to Peter that he should go to the sea and take a fish, to pay with the coin found in its mouth, the tribute money, part for himself and part for his Master.¹ But it is not clear that this strife came at that moment, or had reference to this fact. The other Evangelists, who mention the contention, have not recorded the incident of the tribute-money. The words addressed to Peter, after his confession of faith in Christ as *the Son of the living God*, the selection of the same Apostle, together with James and John, to be present with Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and on other occasions which were doubtless more frequent than have been recorded in the Gospels, seem to have given occasion for this contention, and to have led the Apostles to ask whether any of them were to be singled out for pre-eminence, whether any of them should be *the greatest in the kingdom of heaven*.

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven—that is, in the Church? The Church is called the kingdom of heaven—

(1) Because the King who rules over the Church is a heavenly, not an earthly King.

(2) Because His seat, the place where he reigns, is called by this name—heaven: *Heaven is my throne*.

(3) Because those who are admitted into that kingdom, the Church, are called upon to obey heavenly and spiritual laws.

(4) Because the government of God's Church is not of this world; it is wholly heavenly and spiritual.

They asked who is *greatest* now in merit and station in the Church militant, and therefore, by implication, who should be *the greatest* in glory and reward in the Church triumphant. But though their question involved both kinds of greatness, that in the visible and that in the invisible Church of God's glorified saints, yet, in words, they only questioned as to the latter. Their thoughts were of the earth, earthy; and hence they ask, not who shall be, but who is the greatest, who is chief in that kingdom which is already begun.²

¹ “Ἐπαθόν τι ἀνθρώπινον οἱ μαθηταί· διὸ καὶ ὁ εὐαγγελιστὴς ἐπισημαίνεται λέγων· ὅτι ἐν ἐκείνῃ ᾧρᾳ, ὅτε πάντων αὐτὸν προετίμησε.” — *Chrysostom*.

² “L'ambition n'est pas moins un vice des ecclésiastiques que des séculiers. Si les apôtres qui ont tout quitté, et

qui avaient eu les instructions et les exemples de Jésus-Christ si long-temps devant les yeux, y sont sujets, qui ne doit craindre? Elle est quelquefois plus ardente et toujours plus scandaleuse dans le royaume de l'humilité que dans le monde, qui est le royaume de l'orgueil.” — *Quésnel*.

Here is both matter for our imitation and also for our warning. Let us imitate the disciples in this, that when doubt and perplexity and strife arose amongst them, they went to Jesus to resolve those doubts and to remove the cause of contention. So let us go in all distress and perplexity of soul, and have the cause of trouble removed by Him who is our Teacher and Guide. Again, let all, but especially those who have been chosen to minister in God's Church, bear in mind the reproof which Christ here addressed to the Apostles, and through them to all who should thereafter hold office in His Church. The sin which he here rebukes in His Apostles is that ambition which prompts men to strive for pre-eminence, and to endeavour to attain superior stations in the fold of Christ, and hence so frequently to fail in the post to which they have aspired.¹

Origen.

Quemel.

We are taught by this contention amongst the Apostles of Christ, that no condition of life, not even nearness to Christ, exempts us from this temptation of Satan. We are taught, moreover, that ambition and self-seeking are the fertile sources of strife and contention amongst even good men.

Stella in
Lucam.

The kingdom of heaven—So that thou enter therein, be not curious to inquire beforehand what are the dignities and places of power which may be attained by those who are called into the vineyard of God: enough for thee that thou art admitted to the humblest place in that kingdom.

Bengel.

(2) *And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them.*

St. Mark tells us that our Blessed Lord *sat down*; that He gave the lesson of humility from the seat of the teacher. However small the offence of the Apostles may seem to us, the root from whence the contention for pre-eminence sprang was not to be disregarded. Christ solemnly applies Himself to the correction of this spirit of ambition. For this purpose He chose *a little child*,² one whom, as St. Mark tells us, He could take in His arms; one, therefore, devoid of all sinful passion, and for that reason the fitting example of

Mark ix. 35.

Ferus.

¹ "Ars artium est regimen animarum: hanc artem non habet nisi humilis, et tremens sermones Dei, id est, plenè non habet, nisi is in quo efficaciter quiescit Deus."—*Paulus de Palacio.*

² "Apparet hunc parvulum valde fuisse ætate parvulum, tum quod Græcè

vocetur nomine diminutivo παιδίον, quod proprie significat puellum, tum quod apud Marcum dicatur Dominus hunc complexus, pro quo Græcè est ἐναγκαλισάμενος—id est, cum accepisset eum in ulnas quomodo fieri solet infantibus aut valde pueris."—*Jansen. Gandavensis.*

Chrysostom. that humility for which he bids His Apostles strive; one who, by his tender age, would express the purity and the innocence to which He would have every one of His true disciples attain.

Jerome.

Ps. cxxxi. 2.
Matt. xix. 14.
Mark x. 14.
Luke xviii.
16.
1 Cor. xiv.
20.
1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

(3) *And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

By *the kingdom of heaven* in the first verse is primarily meant the material visible kingdom of Christ, in which the Apostles desired to obtain station, and where our Blessed Lord declares that they who are lowliest in their own eyes shall be the greatest. In this verse, by *the kingdom of heaven*—into which none can even enter who are not converted, and who are not as little children—is meant the Church in glory, into which none will be received who are not pure of heart and of a humble as well as of a contrite spirit.¹

Estius.

Christ, then, requires two things from His Apostles, and so from all who would be admitted into His presence in heaven—

Alb. Magnus.
Salmeron.

(1) That they should be converted; should be turned from their present temper of mind, from earthly ambition, and the pursuit of the honours and stations of earth.²

Ferus.
Faber Stap.

(2) That in temper and disposition they should become *as little children*, free, especially, from earthly and fleshly lusts. In these two requirements is pointed out the whole sum of the Christian life: consisting first of conversion from sin, the turning away from everything which is alien to the mind of God, and then the slow, gradual building up of habits of purity and holiness; the daily toil by which, through God's grace, we are enabled to become again *as little children*.

Our Blessed Lord places before us a little child as the object of our imitation, not calling us to copy the imper-

¹ "Vere dico vobis, Nisi ingenium et animum mutaveritis, ita ut efficiamini sicut parvuli, expertes ambitionis et invidiæ, non intrabitis in regnum Meum cœleste: eritis de Ecclesia numero tantum, non merito."—*Hardouin, Paraphras. in loco.*

² "Observandum hoc loco nullos magis à Christo diligendos, quàm qui nulla ambitione tenentur, sed humile de semetipsis sentiunt; hi enim tam similes sunt Domino quam nemo alius.

Hinc et Christus nihil aliud vult à Se doceri quàm humilitatem, sicut alibi dicit: *Discite à Me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde.* Hi autem qui sursum deorsumque cursitant, qui omnem movent lapidem, tantùm ut dignitatem accipiant, non possunt placere Deo; verò, ut majus aliquid dicam, quotquot dignitates ambiunt Deo adversantur et hominibus non placent."—*Hofmeister in Marcum.*

fections, the instability of childhood, but bidding us imitate its readiness to forget and forgive injuries; its freedom from ambition; the love which the child has for all its companions, without regard to their earthly station; that humility—and, as a consequence, that love for others—which is not disturbed by envy and self-seeking; that absence of all contempt for others because they are *little* in worldly estimation, which is the characteristic of uncorrupted childhood. Ludolph.
Stier.

We are not, then, to become in all things as little children, remembering the Apostle's comment upon these words of our Blessed Lord—*Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.* To do otherwise, and not to see that Christ's words refer to the guilelessness and obedience and love of childhood, is to fall into the same mistake which Nicodemus made when he heard our Blessed Lord speak of the necessity of being born again. We must imitate children, by *laying aside all malice and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speaking.* By laying aside—that is, by turning, or being converted from these sins. By— 1 Cor. xiv. 20.
Topiarus.
John iii. 4.
1 Pet. ii. 1.
Dion. Carth.

(1) Being as children, chaste in body, pure in mind, innocent, simple, and modest in deportment. Alex. Nat.

(2) In our ready obedience to our Father's will, as children are obedient to the commands of their parents, unhesitatingly complying with their wishes. Boys.

(3) In our reliance upon the care and protection of our Father in heaven, as children who have no fear for the future, through their reliance upon the protection and love of their earthly parent.¹ Ferus.

(4) In our freedom from malice and hatred and the desire of revenge, or the wish to injure others. Boys.

(5) In the absence of ambition, the anxious striving for worldly possessions; in our truthfulness, and reliance on the truthfulness of others. As children have these qualities by reason of their age and their freedom from the corrupting influence of the world, our Blessed Lord bids us be in will what they are through their infancy. Hilary.
Th. Aquinas.
Tirinus.

¹ "Non sunt solliciti de veste, cibo, &c., sed hæc omnia committunt parentibus, ad quos recursum suum habent, cum quid horum deficit. Si quæras ex aliquo parvulo, Unde tibi vestes erunt, cum has tuas attriveris? pecunias non habes: sarciendi artem non calles: nihil hoc perturbabit parvulum; dicet enim se habere patrem aut matrem, qui hoc de re solliciti sunt. Idem nobis

omnibus faciendum hortatur Apostolus ad Philip. iv. 5, 6, cum ait: *Dominus prope est: nihil solliciti sitis, sed in omni tempore scilicet, vel negotio, oratione et obsecratione cum gratiarum actione petitiones vestras innotescant apud Deum.* Quasi diceret: In omni afflictione per orationem recurrite ad Deum et exponite Ei vestras necessitates."—*Matthew Faber.*

Matt. xx. 26;
xxiii. 11.

(4) *Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest¹ in the kingdom of heaven.*

De Sacri.

Let us note, it was *this child* which our Blessed Lord proposed to His Apostles for their imitation: one who was, doubtless, a model and pattern of childlike humility, purity, and simplicity. Children may early be corrupted by the world and evil example. Christ does not propose such for our imitation and example, but *this child*.

Jans. Gard.

Whosoever shall humble himself—not, let us remark, shall be humbled, for sin and shame may do this: not seem to be humble, for hypocrisy may lead a man to do this, in order that he may appear so to his fellow-men. The promise made by our Blessed Lord is only to those who are really humble—who humble themselves, and are so regarded not only by man, but by God, who sees the heart.² Such shall be *greatest* in merit and desert, *greatest* in reward, not necessarily in station, but in the estimation of God Himself.

Luke ix. 48.

As St. Luke gives the words, *He that is least among you all—least* in dignity, *least* in the sight of men, *the same shall be great*—shall be the greatest before God, who sees not as

Jans. Gand.

man sees

Phil. ii. 8.

In proposing to us the humility of this *little child* for our example, our Blessed Lord, in fact, proposed Himself as the One perfect pattern which we are to strive to imitate. He came as a *little child*, and stood in the midst of mankind. He was not only humble, but *He humbled Himself*, and was pure and spotless of all sin, more than any child of earth can be.³

Jerome.

Matt. x. 42.
Luke ix. 48.

(5) *And whoso shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me.*

One such child—that is, not merely one in age resembling this child, but in lowliness—one who is *such* in humility, *such* in innocency of life, *such* in purity of morals, *such* in freedom from self-seeking and earthly ambition. And the

¹ “Græcis non est otiosus articulus, ὁ μείζων; et comparativus Græco more pro superlativo ponitur.” — Jansen. Gandavensis.

² “Humilitas ex homine facit angelum, sicut superbia ex angelo facit diabolum, imò Luciferum. Primum donum quod ex divini luminis aspectu homini datur est cognitio sui ipsius, ait

S. Dionysius epist. vii. ad Titum, hoc est humilitas.”—Corn. d. Lapide.

³ “Per humilitatem ad sublimitatem ascendatis, quia hæc est via, non alia præter ipsam. Qui aliter vadit cadit potius quam ascendit, quia sola est humilitas quæ exaltat, sola quæ ducit ad vitam.”—S. Bernard, Serm. ii. in Ascens.

reward promised is to those who receive, who aid by their alms, who succour or console, who teach or give spiritual counsel to *such* a person for the name of Christ, for His sake, because he is a Christian, the disciple of Christ. For, as though to make the duty light which he presses upon His followers, Christ says not, who *shall receive* many in *My name*, but even *one*. He who receives as God has given to him power, shall obtain the blessing which Christ has promised, since he receives Christ Himself, and receiving Christ becomes Christ-like.¹ It is, then, remember, not enough that we are pure and humble in our own hearts—the purity within must manifest itself externally in deeds of love; we must show our resemblance to the *little child* and to Christ by receiving those who are humble, and receiving them in Christ's *name*, that is, for His sake, because they are His members, and because he has bidden us so to do.

Bredembach.

Alb. Magnus.
Bruno.

Jerome.
Theophylact.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

In these words our Blessed Lord bids us all manifest our love to Him, the sincerity of our Christian profession, by deeds of love and mercy to others:—

(1) To children, the young in age—to orphans especially; to those who need instruction in the truths of God.

(2) To all poor and childlike souls who follow Him in the ways of holiness and humility. And the promise—infinite in its nature—is this, that those who receive, who aid, who support, comfort, and instruct these because they are the little ones of Christ, because they are His disciples, shall, in receiving them, receive their Lord and Master—shall receive Christ. No greater reward can Christ give us for our deeds of mercy than this; and less He will not give who has promised to give Himself to those who receive *such* in His name.

Ferus.

(6) *But whose shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone (μύλος ὀνικὸς²) were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.³*

Mark ix. 42.
Luke xvii. 1,
2.

¹ “Quicumque susceperit puerum istum in nomine meo, id est, proprietatis et formam hujus innocentis pueri propter Me in se acceperit, imitatusque fuerit, Me recipit, id est Me spiritualiter induit, et mihi vere unitur, placet, ac incorporatur, sicut ait Apostoli induimini Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum.”—*Stella in Lucam.*

² “The mill-stone (μύλος ὀνικὸς) may be rendered *the ass-millstone*, being

either the nether millstone, as some think, which was called *the ass*, because, like an ass, it bears the chief of the weight and burden; or else respects such millstones as were turned about by an ass, in distinction from those that were turned by the hand; for it was usual with the Jews, as well as other nations, to make use of asses in grinding.”—*Gill.*

³ “Συμφέρι αὐτῷ . . . καταπονισθῆναι

Here are, in reality, two punishments which they bring upon themselves who offend, who are a scandal to, the little ones of Christ—

(1) Those who offend such as these do not receive them, and in not receiving them they do not receive Christ, which is the greatest of all loss to the soul.

Ferus. (2) They bring upon themselves such an actual punishment for their offence against these members of Christ as would make the severest temporal punishment preferable to that which they shall endure.

Cajetan. The threatening of our Blessed Lord is directed against those who offend, who are a scandal, a temptation, to others. And not merely those who offend a large number. The sinner who corrupts the soul of even *one* of the little ones of Christ, who perverts from the ways of holiness *one* soul, shall meet with punishment greater and more to be dreaded than to be *drowned in the depth of the sea*. For this threatening is not directed against those who *offend* the infants, the tender in age, but those who deceive, who corrupt, who pervert men of childlike minds and tempers; for that our Lord's words are not confined to children is evident by His adding, *which believe in Me*—who, therefore, are of an age to know and to believe in Christ.

Whitby.

Of all those, then, who injure the souls of others, it is true that *it were better*—

(1) That they should suffer any temporal punishment, even to the loss of life itself, than that which awaits the sinner who has been a snare and a temptation to his fellow-creatures; who has scandalized, offended, and corrupted others.

Avendaño. (2) It were better that he should have died by any means whatever before he had corrupted others, and had deserved that fearful punishment which he will receive who is banished from God's presence.¹

ἐν τῷ πελάγει τῆς θαλάσσης. Piscatoribus et juxta mare conversatis discipulis pœnam à submersione violenta describit: ut intelligant pejus morte violenta et inevitabili malum partum scandalizanti unum parvum Christi." —Cajetan.

¹ "Dr. Allix says it was customary for the Jews 'ἀναθίματα in mare Sodomæ dejicere lapide annexo,' to cast execrable men into the Dead Sea with a stone tied to them; and that there be divers places in the Mishna which prove this. And certain it is, from Diodorus

Siculus (lib. xvi. 35) and others, that this was the ancient punishment of sacrilegious persons, to be cast into the sea. That this custom obtained in Greece we learn from the Scholiast in Aristophanes (*in Equit.*), who saith, that when they drowned any one, they hanged a weight about his neck. To which custom the poet alludes, by saying, he would hang a litigious man about his neck. (*Suidas, in verbo ὑπέρβολος*. And Suetonius saith of this tutor and servant of Caius, that 'Augustus superbe et avaro in provinciis

These words, and this threatening, apply with a terrible force to parents who, by their sins, however secret, become an offence to their children; it is hardly possible, however hidden they may think their sins are, but that they should be an evil example to their children, corrupting and destroying those whom they are bound to love, and for whom they will answer at the last day. Indeed, not only parents, but all men, are called upon to remember that the greatest reverence is due to childhood, and that offences against it are earnestly to be guarded against. Children are more easily impressed than adults; they are, therefore, more easily injured than others—more easily corrupted.

Ludov.
Granat.

Bengel.

(7) *Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.*

Matt. xxvi.
24.
Luke xvii. 1.
1 Cor. xi. 19.

As He wept over Jerusalem at the sight of the miseries which the sins of the Jews were drawing down upon the heads of the people of God, so here He extended His cry of compassion to the whole world.¹

Woe unto the world, to worldly men, because of the scandals, the temptations, and the falls into sin which are caused by their wickedness! *Woe* to them who cause scandals and offences to those in the world, and so hinder them from giving up the world and from following Christ! For where such scandals and offences are, whatever may be the profession of those who cause such scandals, there is the spirit of the world, and not the mind of Christ. *Woe to the world* because of the accumulation of secret as well as of public and unrepented sins, for by them is ruin brought down upon the head of a nation. It is of the hindrances to holiness, of the snares and temptations which especially draw men to impurity of life (τὰ σκάνδαλα), that Christ here speaks—scandals given by sinners, and scandals taken by sinners; for a scandal is often taken which is not a scandal in itself, but becomes so to those who receive into an impure heart that which, though pure in itself, may be made through some failure in itself to minister to impurity.²

Tostatus.

Mariana.

Euthymius.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

grassantes oneratis gravi pondere cervicibus præcipitavit in flumen' (Oct. Aug. cap. lxvii.)."—*Whitby*. See also *S. Jerome in loco*.

¹ "Væ dolentis vox est. Deflet et Dominus Judæos, quòd, post allata ipsis tot Sux salutis remedia, in suis morbis inveterati perseveraverint. . . . Et quia mundus plenus est scandalis, et mundani

deliciis et voluptatibus addicti suo veneno pusillos inficiunt, necesse est ut accendant scandala; non quòd necesse sit simpliciter et absolute venire scandala, alioquin immunis esset à culpa qui scandalizaret, sed quòd improbitate hominum et malitia necesse est multos scandalizari."—*Jo. Arboreus*.

² Scandala qui dat, vel patitur.

It must needs be that offences come. That is, since there is, confessedly, evil in the world, it must needs be that this should be a stumbling-block, an offence, and a snare to many who might have resisted and overcome the evil from within. Such, indeed, is the malice of the world, such the envy of Satan, that they will continually seek to seduce the unwary, and so be a scandal and offence to many. For it is as necessary in the nature of things, that the iniquity which is abroad in the world should produce scandal as that fire should produce heat, and snow cold.¹ No necessity, indeed, compels the human heart to assent to sin; but the very presence of evil is an offence both to those who overcome it and to those who are entangled and overcome by it

Ludov.
Granat.

Alex. Nat.

Jerome.

The greatness of their sin who offend others, the reality of the scandal which they cause, is shown in these particulars—

(1) That even a violent death, such as criminals suffer, is preferable to being the instigation to sin and the cause through which men depart from God.

(2) The double *woe* which our Blessed Lord here utters is an indication of the greatness of the punishment which such offenders will endure.

(3) That to corrupt others is a breach of Christian charity, which is the greatest and most essential of all virtues, and, consequently, an offence against it is a great and heinous sin.

(4) Because it leads to the separation from God of the soul of him who yields to the temptation, and so causes, unless repented of, the death of that soul for whom Christ died.²

Toplarius.

Dent. xlii. 6.
Matt. v. 29,
30.
Mark ix. 43,
45.

(8) *Wherefore if thy hand or foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.*

Our Blessed Lord warns His Church against scandals, which are either—

Sunt enim patientibus occasio peccandi, facientibus causa supplicii æterni.”—*Emman. Sd.*

¹ “Σκάνδαλα indicat insidias, actiones omnes quibus evertitur sectatorum Christi fides et constantia, cujus generis actiones erant persecutiones, denegatio officiorum humanitatis, con-

temptus, contumeliæ,” &c.—*Kuinosl.*

“Scandalum est dictum vel factum minus rectum præbens occasionem ruinæ.”—*Tostatus*

² “He offends another who deceives him as to the things of God, so that his soul be lost.”—*Ælfric.*

(1) Active—such as cause offence to others, or which tempt others, which drive from the heart of others the desire after holiness; depravity, and even inconsistency between profession and practice. Such latter was that contention and strife amongst His Apostles which was an offence to the unstable disciples, and a hindrance to the work of their mission. Hofmeister.

(2) Passive scandals—those which men would have to endure and to guard against and resist as long as they should remain in this world; the desires which spring up within us; the friends whom we love and who would corrupt us; those things which are as dear and as closely connected with us as a hand, a foot, or an eye. Ludolph.

Our Blessed Lord is not here speaking of the members of the body; for one foot cannot be a means of sin more than the other, one hand will not lead us to evil more than the other, one eye cannot tempt us to wickedness more than the other. By the *hand* is to be understood those friends who are to us as the very members of our body, and of whose services we avail ourselves in our daily life, using them even as if they were our own hand. By the *foot* is meant those who are of service to us, who minister to us and support us, on whom it may seem to us, there is a necessity for relying. Yet are these to be *cut off*—we must separate ourselves from these, however necessary they may seem to us, if they lead us to evil.¹ So that these words of Christ are the call to us to depart from the company of evil men; to sever ourselves from them, even though they should be of our own household, and should seem to us to be as necessary as our own hand or foot.² Tostatus. Theophylact. Rab. Maurus. Th. Aquinas. Gorranus. Jans. Gand.

What, then, we would do if our life were in danger—sacrifice a limb in order to save ourselves from death—our Blessed Lord bids us do in order to escape spiritual death:—Topiarus.

(1) To *cut off* and mortify the affections of the mind, which lead us to evil.

¹ “Homo homini necessarius ad operandum, ad supportandum, ad docendum. Quod corrigit in agendis, est manus: quod supportat, est pes [Job xxix. 15]. Unde si manus tua, id est ille qui dirigit operationem tuam, vel pes, id est ille qui sustentat te, scandalizat te, id est occasio peccati tibi, abscinde eum, et projice abs te: quia melius est quodcumque malum temporale pati, quam mereri pœnam æternam.”—Th. Aquinas.

oculum aut præcidendam manum intelligas, sed spiritualem oculum aut manum aut pedem—id est, amicum qui tibi pro oculo est in consilio, aut pro manu in auxilio, aut pro pede in lucro: etiam si dexter sit et ad bonum te inducit, si aliàs te in peccatum trahit, projice eum abs te, declina ab eo, fuge illius societatem: melius est tibi sine amico salvari quam propter amicos periclitari: melius est carere bono consilio quam perire malo consortio.”—Thomas à Villanova in Conciones.

² “Non ad litteram suffodiendum

(2) To give up outward advantages, friends, and companions, and all those things on which we rely, however needful they may appear to be.

If thy hand offend thee, if thy business, thy occupation, however pleasing and profitable soever it may be to thee, burden thee and keep thee back from the kingdom of heaven, *cut it off and cast it from thee*. If thy foot offend thee—thy affection, earthly and carnal delights—reject it, cut it off, deny thyself, and fly from that which is drawing thee to sin. It is not enough for us to avoid temptation, we must fly as far as we can from the old snare—must not only *cut off* the occasion for sin, but must *cast* it far off out of our sight. It is better for thee to go through life friendless than to follow the evil example of friends, and so be drawn into all kinds of wickedness; it is better to enter into eternal life without companion or friend, without having gratified the flesh or conformed to the world, than to be excluded from the presence of our Father, because of our subserviency to any of these. The poorer thou art in the snares and burdens of this earth, the richer shalt thou be in the eternal kingdom.¹

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Gorranus.

Ph. Dicz.

(9) *And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.*

There is a gradation to be noted here: the eye is more valued than either the hand or the foot; and this is to be given up, to be cut off and cast away as worthless, if it hinder us from attaining eternal life.

Bengel.

In this and in the preceding verse we are taught that men may become a scandal and offence—

(1) When they assist in the preparation of that which is sinful, when they become the *hand* by which evil is done.

2) When they are the ministers of wrong; when they are subservient to the evil man, rendering him that service which the *foot* renders to the body.

(3) When by counsel they aid the sinner, becoming to him what the *eye* is to the body of man. The *hand*—the helper and partner in sin—is to be avoided; his company is to be given up. The *foot*—he who supports you, and enables you to do that which is sinful: the *eye*—the evil

¹ "Nemo in vitam æternam, nisi integer omniumque defectuum immunis ingrediatur. Sed vult dicere, quod si cum aliquo defectu in eam esses ingressurus, melius esset te aliqua corporis

tui parte carentem in vitam æternam ingredi, quam integrum gehennalibus cruciatibus contorqueri. Ubi, quo integrior esset, eo plus ignis ille quod torquere posset, haberet."—Ph. Dicz.

counsellor who leads thee as an eye guides and directs the rest of the body, and conducts thee into sin—all these are to be cut off, and to be parted with, rather than we should lose our entrance into eternal life. Ludolph.

(10) *Take heed that ye despise¹ not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.* Gen. xxxii. 1, 2.
Ps. xxxiv. 7
Dan. vii. 10, 16.
Luke i. 19.
Heb. i. 14.
Rev. viii. 2.

Take heed—be diligent. It is not enough that we on the whole keep down offences; we are called upon to exert ourselves, to use all diligence in abstaining from evil, and are bidden to remember what the effect of our sins may be upon the *little ones* of Christ, whether they be children in age or the newly converted, who are weak in the faith—all those, in short, whom the world too generally despises because they are *little* in age, in estimation, and importance. The sins of thoughtlessness are here forbidden—those offences which arise from our carelessness as to the consequences of our sin upon others. Origen.

We are, then, commanded to regard the young and the lowly, the *little ones* of Christ—

(1) Because they are the very patterns which we should strive to imitate.

(2) Because offences against them will be visited with grievous punishment to ourselves.

(3) Because *their angels* are always in the presence of our *Father which is in heaven*. For if the angels of God are sent to minister to the mature Christian, it is not the less true that they are charged with the care and protection of the young also.² Toplarius.
Lightfoot.

¹ “Despising is hurtful to the despiser, as a sin: it is hurtful also as a scandal to the despised: and therefore our Saviour, discoursing of not offending little ones, anon varieth the word and speaketh of not despising them, as if despising were an especial and principal kind of offending or scandalizing. And verily it is so, especially to the weak. Nothing is more grievous to nature—scarce death itself—than for a man to see himself despised. It is a thing that pierceth far and sinketh deep, and striketh cold and lieth heavy upon the heart: flesh and blood will digest anything with

better patience.”—*Sanderson ad Clerum*. Sermon i. § 9.

² “Every child has his angel until sin drives him out, as we may yet trace it in the reflection of the angelic appearance on the countenance and in the form of children: children, as such, belong as yet to the ‘children of God,’ until the offence from within and without causes them to be lost. Every believer, again, who may be saved through the grace of redemption gets, as a new spiritual child, his angel again, and especially needs him in his weakness as a beginner, now for protection and monitions of a deeper kind,

Augustine,
De Civit.
Del. c. xxii.

Ferus.

Jerome.
Th. Aquinas.

Cajetan.

Sylveira.

Enim. ab.
Incarnat.

Their angels—that is, as St. Augustine in one place says, is meant not merely that they are *their* angels because they are fellow-citizens, fellow-members of the household of God, equally with those to whom they minister, but that they are *their angels* because specially deputed by God to guard over and to direct these *little ones*.¹ Here, indeed, is nothing said of one angel being appointed to watch over each soul; but *angels* are spoken of in the plural, as watching the steps and ministering to the necessities of the whole body of the faithful.² However likely, then, it is, as many have supposed, that each soul has its peculiar guardian-angel appointed by God to guard and defend that soul, yet this is not asserted in the text, but only the fact that angels do perform this office for man. And it is added, *In heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven*. By speaking of these angels as being *in heaven*, is meant both that the angels referred to are the good spirits of God—celestial angels; not those watchful spirits of evil who have fallen from heaven—and also that their place is still around the throne of our Father. For these, even when employed on their mission of love from God to His servants, His little ones on earth, are not deprived of the sight and glory of their God and Master in heaven.³ They, then, who

than the weak, foolish children in bodily danger. We forget the angels far too much, although Christ reminds us of them in the daily prayer (in the third petition); we speak, in particular, to our children far too little about their angels; and we ourselves, as believers, do not think enough of ours. This is, at the same time, a sinful despising of these exalted servants of the Most High, who yet so faithfully stoop down to us; it is also a despising of Him who sends them.”—*Stier*.

¹ Th. Aquinas, in his commentary at this place, gives both opinions as to the meaning of these words, *their angels*, and says: “(1) *Their, angels*, because they are deputed to take care of each of God’s children; for as St. Jerome says, To each man is deputed an angel to minister to him—*unicuique homini deputatus est angelus ad sui custodiam*. (2) *Their angels*, because these are the fellows and fellow-citizens of God’s people, for the society of angels and saints is one.”

² “Megaris Theologorum sententia

est, Deum moderari infima per media; per corpora igitur cœlestia supremus ille moderator omnia hæc inferiora corpora gubernat, inde enim proveniunt pluviae et serenitates, glacies et nives atque ros matutinus, dierum et noctium vicissitudo et quatuor temporum anni varietas, ad rerum procreationem accommodata. Sic etiam homines Deus per angelos regit et gubernat.”—*Fran. Labata in Appar. Concionatorum*. See on this a sermon by J. H. Newman on St. Michael’s Day, *Parochial Sermons*, vol. ii.

³ “Magna dignitas animarum, ut unaquæque ab exordio suo Angelum habeat ad sui custodiam deputatum.”—*S. Jerome in loco*. Vide P. Lombard, in *Sent.* ii. Dist. 11; Th. Aquinas, *Summa Secund.* in loco; Estius, *Sent.* ii. Dist. 11; Petavius, *De Angelis* (Opera, t. ii. c. 6); Didymus, *De Sancto Spiritu*; Hieronymus ad Eustoch. ad init.; and Bishop Bull’s two sermons on the Existence and the Office of Angels (*Works*, vol. i. pp. 261-365, edit. Oxford, 1846).

see the sins by which men offend, tempt, and corrupt their brethren—especially the young, the lowly, the unstable and weak in faith—see at the same time the face of their *Father which is in heaven*, see the manifestation of His glory, the vision of eternal peace;¹ so that, in offending their brethren, men sin in the sight of those who are standing around the throne of God, and in despising *these little ones* they despise those who are their ministering spirits sent forth by God for this purpose, and thus they despise Him who is alike the God of angels and of men.

Lyserus.

Heb. i. 11.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

The watchful care of the angels of God is shown in this, that they are *always* in His presence in heaven, who Himself sees everything, however minute, and knows every want of every creature whom He has made, and sends these angels of His on their mission of mercy to every soul, and though *always* there, yet are they neither standing nor seated, but engaged perpetually in the ministry of God to man. This watchfulness of the angels of God ought not only to be a motive to keep us from sinning, lest we offend and injure others, but it should stimulate us to imitate them in their care of *these little ones* of Christ. They indeed take care of, they watch over, *these little ones* of God both in body and soul, and so much the more, because they are not able to care for themselves.²

Piscator.

S. Bernard.

Bengel.

The lessons which we may all of us learn from these words of our Blessed Lord are—

(1) Thankfulness for the great mercy and bountifulness of our Heavenly Father to us His children, in that, not content with giving the inferior creatures of this earth for our good, He has made His angels also to be the ministers of His love to us men.³

(2) Consolation, when surrounded by danger and threatened by the assaults of Satan, in the knowledge that if the angels of evil are active for our destruction, the angels of God are also active for our preservation, and are ever present with us to shield and defend us in all the assaults of our spiritual enemies.

(3) But these words are not only a ground for thankfulness, and a source of consolation; they also remind us that the angels of God are by our side at all times, seeing,

¹ “Angeli etiam, cùm mittuntur, non fraudantur gloriâ visionis, quia ubique occurrit divina essentia.”—*P. Damian, Serm. de S. Michaelo.*

sed ubicunque sunt Dei, qui ubique præsens est, perfrui contemplatione, atque ratione Ejus contemplationis dici esse in cœlo.”—*Jansen. Gand.*

² “Notandum angelos etiam, cùm non sunt in cœlo, sed ad nos missi sunt, non carere beatifica Dei contemplatione,

³ “Si vis habere custodiam angelorum, fuge consolationes sæculi.”—*S. Bernard.*

Mariana.

therefore, all our actions, and warning us that we strive to avoid all unseemly actions, as knowing that those pure spirits who stand for ever in the presence of our Father are witnesses of all that we do.

If God so honour the *little ones*, the lowly of earth, by giving to them His angels to be their special guardians, let us beware how we despise those whom God thus greatly esteems.

••• “Domine Jesu Christe, Magister et Rector bone, omnia interiora et exteriora mea gubernare propitius et rege, ne unquam aliis de me, vel mihi de aliis, scandalum proveniat, sed omnem occasionem scandali Tua gratia à me abscindat penitus et excludat. Da etiam mihi ut nullum de pusillis seu

parvulis præsumam contemnere, sed potius omnes strideam honorare, quos Tu sic honorare dignatus es, quodd ad eorum ministerium et custodiam angelos beatos deputasti, et Tu ipse pro eis salvandis de cœlo in mundum venire et mori voluisti. Amen.”—*Ludolph.*

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST.

ST. LUKE x. 1—7.

(1) *After those things the Lord appointed other seventy¹ also,² and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself would come.* Matt. x. 1.
Mark vi. 2.

In the early part of the ministry of the Incarnate One He chose the twelve Apostles who should be witnesses of all His works, and who should be the first ministers of His word; and now, when men had been prepared to receive His teaching and to acknowledge Him as the expected Messiah, and when the increasing harvest required a larger number of labourers, *He appointed other* messengers to proclaim the self-same truths, and chose the *seventy also* for this work, Apostles, and messengers for the self-same office of teachers as the twelve, though not to be always with Him in the same close relationship; Apostles of a second order, as it were. The choice was made *after these things*—that is, Ecumenicus.

¹ The Vulgate reading is seventy-two, instead of seventy, as in the Authorized Version. And *Maldonatus*, who supports the text of the Vulgate, yet says: "Magna de hoc discipulorum numero quæstio est, quia non solum Græci plerique codices et Syriaci septuaginta solum legunt, sed etiam auctores veteres, maximeque Græci, cum eos numerant, aut mentionem de illis quoque modo faciunt, non nisi septuaginta solent ponere, ut Iren. lib. ii. cap. 37, et lib. iii. cap. 13; Clemens, lib. iv. disp. ut citat Eusebius, lib. i. Hist. Eccles. cap. 14; Ambrose hoc loco et Serm. 24; Hieron. ad Fabiolam de 42 Mansionibus; Damasc. Epist. iv.; Concil. Neocæs. cap. xiii. apud eundem

Damas. Doroth. in synopsi. Sunt qui id quoque ratione confirment, numerum hunc septuaginta, sicut et duodecim, Judæis in honore et veneratione fuisse: hunc quidem propter duodecim Patriarchas, illum vero propter septuaginta animas quæ cum Jacob ingressæ sunt in Egyptum, unde totus deinde Judæorum populus propagatus est [Genesis xlv. 17]."

² Ἐτέροις ἑβδομήκοντα. — "I. e. other persons, seventy in number." — *Alford*. "Seventy others also." — *Sharpe*. Or, as in the Syriac, "Jesus separated out of His disciples, seventy others," in addition to the Twelve whom He had separated to be His Apostles.

Janſen Yp.
Menochius.
Luke ix. 51.

after our Blessed Lord had departed from Galilee and had again come into Judæa.

John x. 11.

The sending forth of the *seventy* seems to have taken place soon after the feast of Tabernacles—at which Christ had spoken of Himself as *the Good Shepherd*—at which time He had warned His disciples against the thieves and robbers who, without authority, should enter into His fold, as well as against the mercenary, who might indeed have a true mission and a valid call, but who should serve in the ministry of God's Church only for hire and an earthly reward.

John x. 16.

In the injunction given to the seventy there seems a carrying on of the same teaching—a reference here to what our Blessed Lord had there said of Himself. He, the Good Shepherd of the fold, and of those sheep whom He would bring into the fold, was now showing Himself the Guide and Director of all His sheep in the choice and charge which He here gives to the seventy whom He was sending *before His*

Barradius.

face.¹ The number of these sent forth as the preachers of His Gospel is the same as that of the elders whom God commanded Moses to set over the congregation to assist

Numb. xi. 16.

him in the government of the children of Israel, whilst the number of the Apostles agrees with that of the Patriarchs—the heads of the nation of the Jews.² There seems, then, in this an undoubted reference to the Elder Church. He was the prophet like unto Moses, promised of old to the children of Israel—surrounded as Moses was by the twelve chiefs of the tribes of Israel and the seventy elders who were appointed to assist him in bearing that burden which was too great for him alone. These two bodies of men, selected by our Blessed Lord to be the sources of spiritual grace and the witnesses of the truth of Christ's words, were typified of old by the *twelve wells of water* at Elim and by

Tostatus.

¹ “Joannes cap. x., post Christi sermonem de bono pastore, fure, et mercenario, ad encæniorum festum transit. Sermonem autem de bono pastore, fure, atque mercenario habuit Dominus prope festum scenopegiæ sive tabernaculorum, ut colligitur ex capit. vii. Joannis, et ex sequentibus, quod festum mense Septembri celebre erat. Hoc mense, vel circiter eo tempore, quod interfluxit inter festum tabernaculorum et festum encæniorum, volunt Janſenius et alii missos à Domino discipulos septuaginta duos. Quod non sint missi ante festum tabernaculorum probatur, quia Lucas ait missos postquam Christus Jerosolymam petivit: *Post hæc*, inquit,

designavit Dominus et alios septuaginta duos [Luc. x. 1]. *Post hæc*—id est, postquam Jerosolymam abiit ad festum tabernaculorum.”—Barradius. Confer Luc. ix. 15.

² “He selected and ordained seventy others, in allusion to the seventy elders of Israel [Numb. xi. 16, 24, 25]. The Vulgate, Latin, and Persic versions read seventy-two, and so does Epiphanius (Cont. Hæres. hæres. 20). The Jewish Sanhedrim is sometimes said to consist of seventy, and sometimes of seventy-two, though commonly said to be of the round number seventy, as these disciples may be.”—Gill.

the threescore and ten palm trees near to which the wanderers in the desert encamped on their journey to Canaan.

Exod. xv. 27.
Titus Boet.

These disciples our Blessed Lord sent forth throughout Judæa. He *sent them* to labour as He laboured, for none are admitted into the Church of God, still less are any chosen into the ministry of that Church, for their own ease and comfort, but in order that they may labour in His vineyard and be the messengers to others of His mercy. And these He sent forth *two by two*. We have instances of this law, that the ministers and preachers of God's word should go forth in company, occurring repeatedly both in the Old and New Testaments.¹ When Pharaoh was bidden to send forth the children of Israel from Egypt, Moses and Aaron his brother were commissioned to deliver this message. Joshua and Caleb, again, were especially selected to explore the land of Canaan before the rest of the Israelites entered the Promised Land; and some have seen in the command to Moses to make *two trumpets of silver*, to be used for the gathering of the congregation, an image of the Evangelists going forth to assemble the people to hear the message of God.² It seems to have been the practice of our Blessed Lord, during the time of his incarnate life on earth, to send forth His twelve Apostles and disciples by *two and two*. In this manner the twelve Apostles are enumerated, not altogether nor singly, but by twos; and when they were first sent by Him to preach the Gospel they were sent *two and two*. When He was about to enter Jerusalem in triumph He observed the same rule, and two of them were sent forward to loose the animals on which He would ride; and so again when He would eat the Last Supper with His Apostles two were sent to prepare the guest-chamber, and to make all things ready. Nor was this practice confined to our Blessed Lord. When John the Baptist would certify his disciples of the truth of Christ's claim to be the Messiah, we read that he did likewise, and *sent to Him two of his disciples*.

Sylveira.

Exod. iv. 14,
27.

Josh. xiv. 6.

Numb. x. 2.
Isa. lviii. 1.
Ph. Diez.

Origen.

Matt. x. 2—4.

Mark vi. 7.

Matt. xxi. 1.
Luke xix. 29.

Luke xxii. 8.

Maldonatus.

Matt. xi. 2.

¹ "Postquam per duos mundus perditus est, puta Adam et Evam, duo semper ad reparationem mittuntur. . . . Est etiam nobis duplex error, intellectus defectus et depravatio voluntatis, animæ peccata et corporis. Anima superbit, ambit, cupit: caro verò concupiscit illecebras, pane et vino saturari."—*Soarez*.

² "Has tubas *binas* esse Deus præcipiebat, scilicet, ut significaret concionatorum omnium prædicationem in Dei et proximi amore includi. Illasque *argen-*

teas esse volebat, ut ostenderit concionatorum verba casta, inimicunque examinata ad animarum ædificationem et utilitatem, non verò ad earum scandalum esse oportere. Et ita dicit David: *Eloquia Domini, eloquia casta, argentum igne examinatum* [Ps. xii. 6]. Omnia concionis verba quasi argentum divini amoris igni probari, purificarique oportet, sicut argenteas tubas exactissimas temporalium omnium vacuas divinoque spiritu repletas."—*Ph. Diez*.

He sent them *two and two*, thus admonishing them—

(1) That they should be united to each other in the firmest bond of charity ; and that not only for their own soul's sake, but for the sake of those to whom they were sent. For by love and concord, by the spirit of union, and by the outward manifestation of a growing love, are men gathered into Christ's Church, and bound together in one body.¹

Hugo de S.
Charo.

(2) They were to go forth *two and two* because of the mutual consolation and assistance which one might be to the other in the work of their ministry.²

Alex. Nat.

(3) By so doing they would materially confirm the faith which each taught. Their union would add strength to the testimony which each bore to the truth which is in Jesus.

Gorranus.

(4) They were to go forth in company because of the mutual instruction which one would have from the other.

Cajetan.

(5) Because of the mutual safeguard which they would be to each other in temptation, for the greater preservation of purity, and for their mutual defence against sin.³

Gregory.

No one, indeed, ought now to present himself for the office of a preacher of the Gospel of love who is not himself in perfect charity with all men.

Toletus.

These elders were sent forth *before the face* of Christ to announce His approach and to prepare a way for His coming, by preparing the hearts of men to receive Him.⁴ This, indeed, is the office of all His ministers, not merely those who were with Him in the time of His dwelling visibly on earth, but until the end of time, to prepare men for the coming and the indwelling of Christ in their hearts. Indeed, these words themselves seem to refer not so much to a material coming of Christ, not so much to His entry in our nature into *every city and place*, but rather to the spiritual coming of Christ into the hearts of men, since these mes-

Quesnel.

¹ "Salvator mundi ecclesiam suam fundavit in fraternitate sanctorum Petri et Andreæ prout observat author operis imperfecti in Matthæum : 'Super fraternitatem charitatis ecclesiæ rectè posuit fundamenta, ut radicibus charitatis exuberans quasi humor ascendat in ramos.'"—*Arandaño*, Serm. de S. Lucæ.

² "Misit binos ob honestatem, et ut prædicatores non vagentur, sed testem actorum vitæ suæ habeant; quia solitudo ansam porrigit peccandi. Misit etiam binos quia infirmi; nam frater qui juvatur à fratre tanquam civitas firma: et ut servent in docendo con-

cordiam; et ut in ore duorum vel trium testium stet omne verbum [Matt. xviii. 16]."—*Salmeron*.

³ "Binos discipulos Christus mittit, ut mutuo sibi auxilio ac consilio esse possint, et ut ad operandum alter alterius exemplo excitetur, alterius præsentia provocetur ad bonum, abstrahatur à malo."—*Novarinus*.

⁴ According to Epiphanius and to general Church tradition, St. Luke was one of this seventy, and he is the only Evangelist who ever held this appointment. See Fabricii, *Lux Evangelii*, pp. 115, 116

sengers of His were to go into cities and villages which Christ would hardly visit in the body. It is, therefore, His spiritual coming and abiding in men's hearts to which reference seems made—the preaching of the Word, the assent of the understanding of the hearers, and, as a consequence, the entry of Christ into the heart. Stella.

The one end of the labours of these seventy, the sole object of their mission, was to prepare men's hearts for the indwelling of Christ, as this is the end of all the labours of His ministers now—the one object which they are to keep ever before their eyes, and for which they are earnestly to strive. They did but go before, *whither He Himself would come*, to make their preaching efficacious, and to abide in that place which they had prepared for Him. So does the Lord ever follow the true preachers of His word, entering in where they have gone before, and coming to that heart which they have prepared for Him.¹ Alb. Magnus.
Ph. Diez.
Basil.

(2) *Therefore said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest.* Matt. ix. 37.
38.
John iv. 35.
Acts xvi. 9;
xviii. 10.
2 Thess. iii. 1.

In these words our Blessed Lord gives the reason why He chose and sent forth the seventy disciples, after He had chosen and sent forth the twelve Apostles. It was because the harvest was too great for the small band of the Apostles to gather in. Toletus.

The ingathering of men from the fields of infidelity, and their gathering into the Church of God, whether militant or triumphant, is called in Holy Scripture by this name—the *harvest*. Thus of the readiness of the Samaritans to hear the Word and to follow the truth, our Blessed Lord said to His disciples, *Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest*. Again, when He spake of Cecumenius.
John iv. 35.

¹ “Quando scit discipulus quod magister est visurus opus suum et quod illud debet examinare, operatur majori diligentia et cura. Sic contingit ut paterfamilias aliquando dicat agricolis, Ite ad fodiendum in vinea mea, et ego ibo postea ut videam quam bene laborastis. Isti agricolæ non est dubium, nisi quod scientes dominum venturum post illos ad videndum opus, diligentius et solertius laborabunt et non otio torpebunt, nec ubi displicebit domino suo
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laborabunt, sed ubi viderint dominum gaudere, maxime si ipse dominus agriculturam optimè noverit et percalluerit, magnificè laborantes prætermisurus. Ideò Christus mittit istos ubi erat postea ipse venturus, ut nos animaret et exhortaretur ad bene et fideliter exequendum officium, suum scientes Dominum illic venturum. Admonet locus iste sic vivere et operari tanquam qui Deum inspectorem habeamus omnium operationum nostrarum.”—*Stella*,
H H

the final gathering together of all men, the glory of the Church triumphant, He made use of the same figure—*The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels.* And in the Book of the Revelation, *the angel who came out of the temple is represented as crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud—One like unto the Son of Man: Thrust in Thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.* The whole time of man on earth is the period of the springing up, the growth, and the ripening of this harvest of souls, which is indeed *great*, since it embraces all people, and extends to the whole earth.¹ The seed was sown in the days of the old Patriarchs: the ground was ploughed and harrowed by trials and punishment for sin: the seed was watered by the rain and the dew of Divine grace: the first shooting of the seed was in the days of the Patriarchs before the law; it grew under the teaching of the prophets during the time of the law; it is ripening now under the teaching of the Apostles and preachers of the Gospel, for *the harvest is the end of the world.*

Hugo de S.
Charo.

The harvest truly is great. In these words our Blessed Lord shows the extent of the field in which His ministers were to labour. It was not that of Judæa only; it extended into all lands. *The harvest truly is great*, for it embraces the whole Gentile world, as well as the nation of the Jews. And the gathering in of souls is called by this name, the *harvest*, because of the resemblance between the natural ingathering of the fruits of the earth and the spiritual harvest of souls. That which is brought into the granary is not wheat only, but straw and chaff also; as the Church of God on earth embraces the good and the bad. As the wheat is brought into the barn to be winnowed, in order that the refuse may be separated from it, so at the end of the world shall the good be separated from the bad—God's wheat from the world's straw. And as this separation of the material wheat is by the flail of the thresher, so are men brought out of the midst of evil now; so is sin separated from the heart of the people of God by the flail of persecution and of suffering, and by the fan of trial.

Gorranus.

Stella.

It is but one *harvest* which is spoken of, since all are of one creation, were intended to be members of the *one body*, to be gathered into one storehouse, and to be the possession of *one Lord*. But, again, let us not forget one other lesson

Eph. iv. 4, 5.
Gorranus.

¹ "*Messis quidem multa. Scilicet, esset qui meteret—id est, instruere totum genus humanum, in quo multi eos.*"—Hugo de S. Charo.
sunt parati converti ad Dominum, si

which we may gather from the use of this figure, *the harvest*. As in the material wheat the chaff, though it serves not the purpose of man for food, is yet not without its use, since it covers and shelters the grain from the heat of day and the cold of the night; so are evil men not without their usefulness to the children of God. They teach patience by their presence, they nourish charity by the trials which they cause, they are the means of temptation, and thus strengthen and harden the soul in those virtues which make men meet Stella. for the garner of God.

The first precept given by Christ to these *seventy* ministers of His word, these first labourers in His vineyard,¹ is, that because of the greatness of the spiritual harvest, for the sake of those committed to their charge, they should pray that others should be sent in to labour there, so that the wheat should not be lost for want of labourers. The greatness of the harvest should also teach us that those who are sent in should not be idle in the field which God has assigned to them, that they should not be self-seekers, but true Cajetan. labourers, earnest in the work committed to their charge, Gorranus. serving their Master not with their lips only, but with their Topiarus. life, their daily toil, by their example, their words, and their Stella. activity in the work which Christ has given them to do.²

Pray ye the Lord of the harvest. Christ bids His disciples pray that *He would send forth labourers into the harvest*, and by so doing teaches them that the power to preach aright is to be sought from Him. He says, not pray that he would send you, for we are not to seek this office, but that he would send *labourers*, whether ourselves or others, who will labour in this His work, and gather in not their own but Novarinus. *His harvest*.³

Let those who are called to minister in God's Church

¹ "Operarii dicuntur prædicatores, ne de nudis verbis sibi blandirentur; ab operibus potius quam à verbis doctores denominantur, ut discerent, bonis moribus eis præire, quos verbis informant." —*Novarinus*.

² "Observe quòd operarios vocat prædicatores verbi Dei, ut scias quòd non solum ore, sed vitâ, moribus et exemplo ac sudore, prædicare debes. Illi qui ædificabant Jerusalem una manu tenebant gladium, altera vero operabantur. [Nehem. iv. 17.] Paulus Apostolus verbum Dei comparat gladio, cum dicit, *Vivus est sermo Dei, et efficax, et penetrabilior omni gladio*

incipiti. [Heb. iv. 12.] Sic prædicatores in altera manu debent habere verbum Dei, altera verò operari. Hæc de causa Dominus dixit Esaiæ, *Quasi tuba exalta vocem tuam*. [Isa. lviii. 1.] Cur non dixit, Quasi leo, tonitru, vel quid simile, quia tuba ponitur in ore et manibus tenetur. Sic prædicatio ore fit et manibus sustentatur, hoc est bonis operibus. Oportet ut ore et exemplo prædices." —*Stella*.

³ *His harvest*. "Ac si diceret non ad arandum vos mitto terramque ingenti labore proscindendam sed ad paratam messem." —*Novarinus*.

remember that the good and true labourer will be wakeful in his care for souls; that he will give himself wholly to his Master's work; that he will be circumspect in removing hindrances which perplex the weak in faith; that he will be prudent in the manner in which he presents the truth to their minds; that he will be wise in instructing those committed to his care, and faithful in gathering the fruits into the storehouse of God. Such *labourers* at all times are *few* and hard to be found even in God's vineyard: where but too many are given over to their own ease, seeking their own glory and advancement, slothful in the work of their heavenly Master, careless of souls, and mercenary and greedy of earthly reward. Such are not the *labourers* for whom we are bidden to pray, but those only who are earnest and faithful, wise and pure of heart, who alone are Christ's true disciples and Apostles.¹

Alb. Magnus.

Matt. x. 16.

(3) *Go your ways: behold. I send you forth as lambs among wolves.*

Hardouin.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Chrysostom.

Having bade His disciples pray *the Lord of the harvest* that more labourers should be sent forth to gather in that harvest, our Blessed Lord adds, in assertion of His own inherent Divinity, that He Himself is that Lord of the harvest. *I send you forth*, He says. I who have power to do so, since I am God. I who have chosen you, I who have instructed you, I who send you forth, am God and the Lord of the harvest. Let this truth, He seems to say, suffice for your consolation in all trials, let this encourage you in all difficulties, let this inspire you with hope, and remove from you all fear and apprehension of evil: I have chosen you and I am with you.²

Our Blessed Lord does not promise His ministers freedom from danger, He does not tell them that He will remove their enemies, but He gives them that which, whilst it makes their charge so solemn, should be the ground of confidence

¹ "Ex prædicta similitudine messis colligimus operarios dici prædicatores. Nec dicit, Pauci sunt doctores, prædicatores, sacerdotes, sed pauci operarii. Non enim operarii omnes sunt qui sacerdotes aut prædicatores. Sunt quidam qui officia ambiunt, non ut operentur sed ut otientur: quos Zach., cap. xi. 17, *idola* vocat. Sunt alii qui operantur quidem sed mercenarii sunt: *sua enim quærunt*. [Phil. ii. 21.] Sunt alii qui operantur quidem sed

infideliter.—*Topiarius*.

² "Ite, ecce ego mitto vos. Ego discretivè. Dominus messem dixerat paratam—id est, corda hominum ad recipiendum verbum—et ideò præceperat discipulis, ut rogarent Dominum messis ut mittat operarios in messem. Sed quia Ipse erat Dominus messis, ut ostendatur, statim illud facit pro quo faciendo præceperat ut rogarent."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

to all, and should make them courageous, however threatening the danger may be. They go not of themselves : it is He who sends them. But for this they might well fear, for unless He send there is no real going forth as the ministers of Christ ; no real call ; no true wisdom. Toletus.

I send you forth : here is a warning and an encouragement to the labourers in His harvest field—a warning against sloth and negligence in their work, an encouragement against despair. Alex. Nat.

(1) *I*, the Lord of all, the Judge of all men, *I* who will hereafter ask you how you have laboured in the office which *I* have assigned to you, and which *I* only can give.

(2) *I*, who can defend you in all dangers, who need not the services of any man, and who can out of much gentleness bring strength, and can make the *lambs* whom *I* send forth mightier than the *wolves* amongst whom they dwell. *It is I*, therefore : *be not afraid*.¹ Hofmeister.

I send you forth as lambs. By using this word He calls upon them to be innocent of life, to be humble in deportment, to be meek in temper, to be patient under trials. These ought to be the marks and characteristics of all those who preach the Gospel of Christ. Looking up for direction and guidance in all things to Him, who is the Shepherd of the sheep, and confiding in Him and following His footsteps as the lambs follow the leading of their shepherd, they are to go forth into the world, not armed with the weapons of strife, and cumbered with the armour of earth, but trusting wholly in the power and the arm of Christ.² But if their Master comforts His disciples with the assurance that He is sending them forth, so that they may trust themselves to His protection, He yet prepares them for opposition, for suffering, and for persecution, by telling them that they are going *into the midst of wolves*. By this name He designates all persecutors, but more especially the Scribes and Pharisees, the priests and elders of the people, who lay in wait to ensnare Him, and who would seek to destroy the faith which these seventy were now going forth to teach.³ Hugo de S. Charo.

¹ "Duae sunt res quae Evangelico concionatori nocere maximè possunt, lucri cupiditas et mortis similitudineque malorum formido. Adversus cupiditatem discipulos armat Christus in his verbis, *Nolite portare sacculum* : adversus imminetia mala communit, *Ecces Ego, mitto vos*—Ego Deus mitto vos, sine cujus nutu nemo vobis nocere poterit."—*Emman. ab Incarnatione in Matthæum*.

² "Mirum non est si discipuli, quos miserat velut agnos, illius in virtute actiones exercuerint leoninas. Discant hinc oportet homines Evangelici esse agnos in patientia, leones vero in verbi Dei prædicatione ac prepugnatione."—*Avendaño. Serm. ii. de S. Luca, § 3.*

³ "Quinam sunt hi lupi, inter quos Dominus discipulos mittit? Non videntur esse Judæi expressè ; nam plebs non erat hostis Christi, imo favebat.

In these words of Christ we are taught—

(1) That though seventy were sent forth by God, yet there was deliberate choice and toil required of them, as there is still of each of His ministers—they were to *go* by the exercise of their will, as God's ministers must *go* now.

(2) The duty and obligation which presses upon all His ministers who have gone forth on their mission: they are to labour diligently, remembering who has sent them into the vineyard. Both as supplying strength under persecution and sustaining them in their rejection by men, as well as giving them warning against sloth, let every labourer in the ministry of God's Church remember that it is Christ who says, *I send you forth*.

(3) We may also learn the temper and disposition which ought to be manifested by those whom Christ sends forth to preach the Gospel—they are to be harmless as lambs. By the first He calls them to constancy—they are to be ever going on their mission. By the second He bids them be obedient to Him who sends them on their work. By the third He enjoins them to be meek and patient under the sufferings which in this world will befall the faithful servants of Christ.¹

Gorranus.

The greatness of the power of Christ is shown in these words, *as lambs among wolves*. His power alone it was which was able to make the lamb superior to the wolf, so that the fierceness of this latter was awed and restrained by the meekness of the lamb. But His mighty power was evidenced still more when the *wolves* among which His disciples had been sent laid aside their wild nature and were transformed into *lambs*, and lay down in the same fold and were nourished by the same pasture.

Chrysostom.

2 Kings iv.
29.

Matt. x. 9, 10.

Mark vi. 8.

Luke ix. 3.

(4) *Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.*²

Erant ergo lupi Pharisæi, sacerdotes, et scribæ, quos invidia ex pastoribus lupos fecerat; erant et alii horum asseclæ. Væ pastoribus quos avaritia vel libido ex pastoribus convertit in lupos, quemadmodum invidia convertit Pharisæos! — *Barradius*.

¹ “*Ecce ego mitto vos sicut agnos inter lupos*. Qui enim locum prædicationis suscepit, mala inferre non debet, sed tolerare: ut ex ipsa sua mansuetudine iram sævientium mitiget et peccatorum vulnera in aliis, ipse afflictionibus vulneratus sanet.” — *Pet. Damianus*.

² “Hoc præceptum Christus ex more Judæorum protulit, quo qui in itinere constituti, vel orarunt, vel meditationibus indulserunt, à salutando et resalutando erant uberes. Sohar Genes. fol. 112, col. 446: ‘R. Chija et R. Jose viatorem salutarunt, sed is eos non resalutavit. R. Jose dixit, Fortasse is operam dat precibus, aut lectionem repetit, ne memoria excidat:’ id quod posterius illum fecisse narratio sequens confirmat. Jubet ergo Salvator discipulos propter res hujusmodi leviores ad civilitatem externam pertinentes nihil

They were to carry *no purse*—that is, they were not to be anxious about their maintenance, but were to lay all their care, all thought for their subsistence, upon Him who provides for the wants of all men. In the words of the Psalmist, they were each of them bidden to *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee*; or, in the words of our Blessed Lord Himself at another time, *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on*. The disciples were also enjoined by their Master to take *no scrip* for food,¹ *nor shoes*—but to rely, that is, merely on the help and assistance of those to whom they have been sent. But let us observe carefully the words of Christ: He says *carry no shoes*; He does not say *wear none*. What is meant is, that His messengers and ministers, and all who are His true disciples, should lay aside all excessive care, all solicitude as to a provision for the future, all distrust in the providence and the love of God.²

Cyril.

Ps. lv. 22.

Matt. vi. 25.

Ambrose.

Calmet.

When Moses would see that great sight, so full of mystery, the bush in the desert which burned with fire, a voice was heard bidding him put off the shoes from his feet. So if we would hold communion with Him who was in the bush, we must strip off and mortify the deeds and affections of the flesh, and go aside from the world with its enticements and from the midst of the cares of the world which choke the seed of Divine grace.

Œcumenius.
Coppenstein.

He who is sent forth commissioned by God to preach a disregard and contempt of the world is called upon first to show to others an example of such disregard by his own actions.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

And salute no man by the way—that is, they were to make no such salutations, no such mingling in the mere courtesies of the world, *by the way*,³ as should hinder them in the work of their mission. This was the injunction which Elisha gave to his servant Gehazi when he sent him to lay his staff by the side of the dead child of the Shunammite: *If thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any*

Menochius.

2 Kings iv.
29.

omittere debere eorum, quæ ad sacrum munus pertinent."—Schoettgen, *Hor. Heb. et Talmud*.

¹ "*Neque peram, in qua viaticum reponatis. Qui enim nutrit animum nutrit et corpus.*"—Jo. Arboreus. "In his verbis ostendit divinus Magister austeritatem, poenitentemque vitam in prædicatoribus esse valdè necessariam, quo eorum prædicatio efficacissima sit, radicitus que auditorum cordibus infixæ

permaneat."—Ph. Dies.

² See S. Chrysostom on Phil. ii. 28 30, Homily the Ninth (Tenth in Mr. Field's edition, tom. v. p. 107).

³ "Salutationes istæ apud orientis populos non fiebant levi gestu verbove, sed multis percunctationibus bonisque ominibus trahebantur, non sine multis corporis flexionibus, osculis, amplexibus."—Grotius.

*salute thee, answer him not again.*¹ By this hyperbolical language does our Blessed Lord set before His disciples the diligence and the entire devotion which the work of the ministry requires.² Turn not aside, He says, from your allotted task; waste no time in worldly friendships and in the mere courtesies of life; for the time is short and the work great, so that you need to bestow all diligence upon that which your Master has appointed you to do.³

Arias Mont.

Matt. x. 12.
Mark vi. 10.
Luke ix. 4.

(5) *And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house.* (6) *And if the son of peace*⁴ *be there, your peace shall rest upon it; if not, it shall turn to you again.*

Æcumenius.

Peace be to this house. Christ bids them say this, not out of compliance to worldly custom, but as an earnest that they came on a message of peace and love, and that the Gospel which they declared would bring *peace* to the souls of all who received it with sincerity. And the disciples are to do this not by way of ordinary salutation only, but they are to *say first*—to pray, that is—that there may be *peace to the house* into which they are about to enter.

Menochius.
Hofmeister.

If the son of peace be there—that is, if he who is worthy of the peace which you bring to the house be there, any one desirous of that *peace* which Christ offers—then, as is fitting, salute the house in these words, *Peace be to this house.* But though there be no one there worthy of what you bring, still your work will not be in vain. Your salutation shall not be barren and unprofitable; it shall return with a blessing

¹ “Hoc injunxit Dominus non ad declinandum affabilitatis indicium, cum Ipse fuerit benignissimus et curialissimus, sed ad declinandum multiloquium.” — *Bonaventura*.

“Non prohibet officia humanitatis, sed ne se patiantur impediri rebus non necessariis.” — *Emman. Sd.*

² “Dominus noster dixit, Uni huic negotio prædicationis vobis demandato, intenti estote.” — *Jo. Faber* in *Hom. dom. xi. post Pent. Con. v. § 4.*

³ “Neminem per viam salutaveris monens quemvis Christianum Deo servire volentem, ut cane pejus et angue fugiat omnes occasiones, quibus in suo possit retardari progressu.” — *Avenidaño*.

⁴ “Literally, ‘a son of peace;’ the

Syriac with all the best MSS. rejecting the article. It is, moreover, written in one word, *ܡܝܢ ܥܡܢ*. Similar instances of this idiom are, *ܡܝܢ ܐܢܫܐ*, *a man*, literally a son of man; *ܡܝܢ ܫܥܝܪܐ*, *immediately*, literally, son of the hour. So also a *counsellor*, is a son of counsel; a *secretary*, a son of the secret; *like*, a son of likeness; *connatural*, a son of his nature; *brought up together*, *ܥܘܢܬܪܦܐ*, a son of his bringing up; a *fellow-heir*, a son of his inheritance, &c.” — Note in Dr. Payne Smith’s translation of *S. Cyril’s Commentary on St. Luke*. *Tischendorf*, *Alford*, and *Wordsworth* reject the article and read “a son of peace.”

to yourselves, and shall be your reward in the world to come, even though seemingly lost here.¹

Hugo de S.
Claro.
Gregory.

Our Blessed Lord here teaches His disciples, that when they fulfil the work of their ministry, when they do that duty which is assigned to them, they are not to be disheartened at the refusal of men to listen to their exhortation and to obey His call uttered through their mouth. The ministers of God lose nothing by discharging the duties of their calling, even though men turn a deaf ear to the invitations of God, and will not profit by the message of mercy which they declare. Enough for them that they teach what has been committed to them; the success is beyond their power; that must be left to Him who alone can give *the increase*, but who at all times rewards His ministers not in proportion to their success, but to their faithfulness.

1 Cor. iii. 7.
Leigh.

(7) *And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give;² for the labourer is worthy of his hire.*

Lev. xix. 13.
Deut. xxv. 4.
Matt. x. 10.
1 Cor. ix. 4;
x. 27.
1 Tim. v. 18.

There are two things against which the ministers and the people of God are warned in these words of the Great Head of the Church.

(1) Ministers are warned against the spirit of impatience. The house, the family, the soul which has a desire after God is not to be passed over by His ministers until it has been instructed in the way of holiness, and has been led back by repentance into the paths of innocence.

(2) The people are warned against robbing God. All those who minister to the people of God in spiritual things, who serve the altar, ought to be maintained as the servants and messengers of God.

Soarez.

The means of living, the necessary support of the body, is not a gratuity for service, it is the reward or wages strictly due to him who labours. And he who really performs his allotted task in the ministry of Christ's Church, who feeds men with the bread of heaven, and ministers to them the very food of angels, is worthy to receive all that can be given to him of the things of earth. But if this be an injunction to the people who hear the word of life and who are ministered to, yet our Blessed Lord by the same word

Alex. Nat.

Stella.

¹ "*Pax huic domui*—hoc est, salute eos qui in domo sunt, ne videamini duri et severi prædicatores. Etenim ipsissimam humanitatis effigiem præ se fert qui studet omnium gratiam et

benevolentiam sibi comparare." — Jo. Arboreus.

² "*Τὰ παρ' αὐτῶν. Quæ illorum sunt; sc. ἀγαθὰ, bona.*" — Elener.

Gorranus.

warns His ministers against striving after and seeking the things of this life: they are to receive thankfully *such things as are set before them*—that is, they are to be content with having their wants supplied, and are not to be solicitous for anything beyond a necessary maintenance.¹

Two rewards are due, and two are promised, to the faithful labourer in the vineyard of God:—

(1) During the journey of this life, whilst employed on his Master's errand, he is to have that which is necessary for his subsistence.

Gregory.

(2) At the end of his journey, at the resurrection of the just, he is to receive a recompense for all the toils and sufferings which he has undergone on earth. He who can then say with truth, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*, may also add with confidence, in the words of the same Apostle, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.*²

2 Tim. iv. 8.

¹ “Quia futura erat discipulorum Christi tam suavis mirabilisque conversatio, ut reliqui cives eos hospitio recipere contenderent, ita ut quis tantis hospitibus vellet frui, ne contentionis et dissidii occasio detur, jubeo vos à primo hospite non discedere.”—*Stella*.

² “*Dignus est operarius mercede sua*, non idèo hac temporali mercede, sed vi cœlestis amoris ad sacrorum ministeriorum exercitationem debetis commoveri, et cùm apparuerit Princeps pastorum, percipietis immarcessibilem gloriæ coronam.”—*Ph. Diez*.

. “O Lord, who by Thy providence didst make St. Luke a physician, and by Thy grace an evangelist; Let me never want the means of health for my body, but especially for my soul. A friend and a physician let me ever find to help and heal me in the way to heaven. Those who are such let me ever value, and in their distress never

forsake. The ministers of Thy honour and my salvation, let me reverence, and (if they need) relieve. And what I desire to do in the name of a prophet to such, God, who knowest the aims and ends of my acts and desires, accept it for Jesus Christ His sake. Amen.”—*Dean Brough*.

ST. SIMON AND ST. JUDE, APOSTLES.

ST. JOHN xv. 17—27.

(17) *These things I command you, that ye love one another.*¹ Sup. ver. 12.

SOME commentators connect the words *these things* with *command*, and understand them in this manner, This I command you: Love one another; and they account for and justify the use of the plural form of the pronoun *these things* (*ταῦτα*), by saying that the command to love embraces so many things, as to make it virtually a plural command, with which the previous pronoun agrees. The more usual interpretation, however, is that which connects the words *these things* with that which has gone before, and that Christ in them says to His Apostles: *These things* which I have just spoken—the nearness of the member to the Head, close as that of the branch to the stem of the vine: the greatness of that love which He bore them, so great that it led Him to lay down His life for them: the fact that they had not first come to Him, but that He had of His own mercy and love come to, and had chosen them, all *these things* have been recounted to you in order that from them ye may learn to love one another.² I have, he seems to say, given you all *these* proofs of My love to you for this end, that by such an example of love I may provoke and encourage you to *love one another*.³ I say not *these things*

Jans. Gand.

"Hæc mando vobis ut diligatis invicem."
—Valg.

Alex. Nat.

Alb. Magnus.
Grotius.

¹ "Hæc præcipio vobis, ut diligat alius alium."—*Syriacus*.

"Hæc annuntio vobis, ut diligatis vos invicem."—*Euthymius*.

² "Hæc mando vobis. Hæc omnia quæ vos hujus que docui, in hunc finem diriguntur, ut scilicet invicem diligatis." *Ph. Diez*.

³ "Ταῦτα is taken by Tholuck and Baum-Crusius for τοῦτο, and there are examples which may be adduced; but

for the simple statement of the one commandment (*αὕτη*, ver. 12), such a plural seems to be quite inappropriate. We are convinced that *ταῦτα*, as always in St. John (or almost always), refers back to what has preceded, embracing not only what had immediately, but also what had more distantly, preceded. Once more, as in ver. 11, we understand our Lord to say, By all these My discourses and command-

to blame you, as though it were through any fault of yours that I am about to *lay down My life*, nor are they spoken in order to enhance the greatness of the gifts which I am about to give you, but that from *these things* ye may learn the duty of loving *one another*.

Chrysostom.

By *these things*, then, are meant, all that has gone before from the twelfth verse. All these signs and tokens of Christ's great love to man were given in order that from them His Apostles, and ourselves also, might learn to *love one another*. In effect, our Blessed Lord says, I tell you these things, that I am about to lay down My life for you, and of My friendship for you, not purposeless, but in order to incite you to mutual love. I tell you that as I lay down My life for you, so ought you to give up even your own lives for the good of others. In that I esteem you not as servants, but as friends, I give you an example of the kind of love which ye ought to have for the members of the Church over which you are placed as overseers. In reminding you that, of My own love towards you, I have chosen you to this great office of the Apostolate, I remind you also of that love which you should have towards those who equally with yourselves have been chosen by Me.¹

Euthymius.

Luca Brug.

John xv. 16.

Rom. xiii. 10.

Augustine.

Gal. v. 22.

Christ had just before said to His Apostles, *I have chosen you and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain*. Here He tells them what that special fruit is for which He looks: love one towards another. For *love is the fulfilling of the law*. He then who had already enjoined upon His disciples this duty, and taught them that they were to love one another, now goes on to promise the Holy Spirit to the members of His Church as an abiding gift, enabling them to perform this His commandment and to *love one another*; for where the Spirit is, there is love, giving men the power to bring forth this very special *fruit of the Spirit*. Nothing is, indeed, more dwelt upon, nothing more inculcated by our Blessed Lord, in this last discourse of His than the duty of mutual love. It is spoken of as the greatest of the commandments,

ments I would specially point you to that one which I would confirm in your hearts, *that ye love one another*."

—Stier.

"*Taûta* in John always refers to what has preceded (ver. 11, 21; xiv. 25; xvi. 1, 25, 33; xvii. 1; xviii. 1)."

—Tholuck.

"Non absurde à quibusdam notatur, ἐντέλλεσθαι aliquando idem esse quod λέγειν seu ἀναγγέλλειν, in quam rem

citantur οἱ ὁ verbum hoc ponentes πρὸς Jos. xi. 9, Esth. ii. 15, and Jos. iv. 12, xi. 23, 1 Reg. xiii. 17. Atque ita sensus esset, Jesum argumenta illa, quæ excussimus omnia cumulassemus, ut dilectionem mutua[m] eo fortius persuaderet."—Lampe.

¹ "Ἰνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους. — "Et vos tanto exemplo provocati diligatis vos invicem."—Rosenmüller.

as that which He specially enjoins upon His followers, as His own commandment, and therefore that which is especially pleasing in His sight : the very mark and characteristic of the disciples of Christ, and the means by which men will at all times know that they are His. Matt. Faber.

Three times in this His last discourse to His Apostles upon His crucifixion does our Blessed Lord enjoin this duty upon them, that they should love one another. In one place He speaks of it as His *New Commandment*, since He by His words had renewed that which had been well nigh forgotten ; again as His own, as *My commandment*, and here as that which *I command you*. In this repetition, at such a moment, would He fasten it upon their memory and upon ours.¹ John xiii. 34.
John xv. 12.
John xv. 17.
Ph. Diez.

By this significant repetition of the command to *love one another*, our Blessed Lord teaches us—

(1) The greatness of this commandment, the importance and necessity of this duty of *love* towards His members and our brethren ; and in order that He may impress it upon the minds of His people, He repeats it.

(2) He shows us by this repetition that the corruption of man is so great, and that the things which separate the members of Christ are so many, that there is need of keeping this injunction perpetually before their eyes—need for the repetition of this command.

(3) By the repetition again—the solemn re-injunction, that they should love one another, we are reminded of the abiding nature of Christian charity, that it will continue unto the end of time.

(4) Our Blessed Lord reiterates this commandment, it may be, because it is that which shall especially console and strengthen us in our separation and estrangement from the evil of this present world.

How great soever the hatred of the world against the faithful members of Christ may be, the love which the Master so frequently enjoins towards all *the brethren* must be stronger, must be still greater than, and compensate for, the world's hatred of them.² Lampe.

¹ “Hoc dixit, cum ad mortem pergere vellet, in ultimo vitæ suæ scilicet, ut firmis hominum cordibus maneret impressum : sicuti manere solent verba amici tui, jam in extremo transitu existentis.”—*Ph. Diez*.

² “La division des ouvriers évangéliques est un des artifices du démon, qui lui réussit le mieux contre l'œuvre de Dieu. A proportion qu'on aime cette œuvre on doit aimer l'union que

Jésus-Christ recommande uniquement aux siens : entretenir la division, c'est travailler à l'œuvre du diable, et s'associer avec lui.”—*Quesnel*.

³ “Egregie D. Chrysost., 1 Cor. Hom. xxxii. Quemadmodum, inquit, vestes licet aureæ sint, calceamenta aurea, aliud tamen quoddam indumentum requirimus, ut regem agnoscamus. Ubi primum autem purpuram et diadema intuemur, jam regis majestatis

Ephes. v. 2.

Teletus.

Ph. Dier.
Deut. xxx. 12,
14.Matt. x. 25.
1 John iii. 1,
13.

Let the ministers of Christ's Church especially remember, that if they would indeed walk by the Spirit, have the comfort of His presence and the blessing of His guidance, they must *walk in love*: that if they would bring forth good fruit, such as Christ directs, they must walk in peace and love with their brethren;¹ that if they would be the means of converting sinners from their corruption and their estrangement from God, and thus prepare them for the same grace to which they have themselves attained by their election in Christ, they must *walk in love*, they must show their *love one towards another*.²

Christ wills that we should serve Him with the affections, and not only by outward obedience. We must obey from the heart, and so His special command is not merely that we should aid but that we should *love one another*, which we shall do if we love Him who has made us all brethren.³ This was indeed the spirit of what He commanded under the old law, however much men had forgotten this in their formal worship. The words of Christ are the repetition with authority of what Moses had been directed to enjoin. *This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. . . But the word is very nigh unto thee in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.*

(18) *If the world hate you, ye know⁴ that it hated Me before it hated you.*

signum nullum aliud expectamus; ita sane cui charitatis diadema incumbit, jam nihil obstat, quominus Christi discipulus vere existimari possit, etc. Recte quidem charitatem appellat diadema: quoniam sicut terreni regis insigne est diadema, sic charitas regni coelestis signum est."—*Barradius*.

¹ "Ubi amor, ibi unitas."—*Hartung*.

² "Tribus modis debent se invicem diligere Christiani, videlicet, corde, ore, et opere. Unde et Dominus non dicit singulariter, *Hoc mando vobis*, sed dicit pluraliter, *Hæc mando vobis*; quia in pluribus consistit dilectio, quæ invicem est habenda. Debemus ergo nos invicem diligere corde, ore, et opere. Unde et Dominus ter mandat et præcipit, ut nos invicem diligamus. Ille etiam discipulus, qui recubuit in sinu Jesu, in Epistola sua ter monet, ut nos alteru-

trum diligamus."—*Alb. Magnus in Serm.*

³ "Cum Luna claritatem terræ non mittit, signum est, eam esse eclipsi obfuscata neque claritatem à sole recipere: Sic ex eo quod anima eclipsata est et divino amore caret, provenit quod proximis suis lucem amoris non præbet."—*Ph. Dier.*

⁴ Γινώσκετε. In the Syriac, Ethiopic, Armenian, Georgian, Slavonic, Memphitic, Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Arabic, and Persian versions, as printed by Mr. Malan, this word is rendered by the imperative, *Know ye that*. "Scitote—id est, perpendite, et diligenter considerate."—*Guilliaud*. "Scitote, pro cogitate."—*Sd.* "That γινώσκετε is imperative the corresponding παραγγελλετε in verse 20 shows."—*Hengstenberg*.

Our Blessed Lord predicts three forms of evil which should befall His Apostles—

(1) They were to endure the hatred of the world.

(2) They were to encounter persecution from the world.

(3) They were to be tried by the contempt with which the world will receive the message entrusted to them.

In all these ways He tells them, for their consolation, that He is their forerunner, and that He had known all these forms of evil. Ferus.

First, then, Christ bids His Apostles *love one another*, that so they may bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, one of which is *long-suffering*; He then proceeds to give them motives for patience and for the endurance of those evils which should come upon them. Gal. v. 22.
Toletus. 100.

By *the world*, which should hate His Apostles, our Blessed Lord points specifically to the Jews. This is evident, since—

(1) It was a present hatred which was referred to. If it goes on to hate you, it has already, He says, begun by hating Me.

(2) It was from the bosom of this nation that the disciples of Christ had been chosen, and this election is spoken of as one cause of the hatred.

(3) The *world* which he predicted should *hate* His disciples had witnessed the works of Christ, and had heard His teaching; but this is true only of the Jewish nation, and not of the Gentile people. Lampe.

But though these words primarily refer to the Jews—for our Blessed Lord uses the present tense in speaking, *if the world now hate you*, which was applicable only to the Jewish people—yet He strengthens them against that future hatred and persecution which they were to receive from the Gentile *world* also. And the words used by our Blessed Lord are almost all of them significant. He tells them that *the world*, men of *the world*, or worldly men, will be those who shall hate His Church, and that because, as He says, they have hated Him already.¹ *It has hated Me*, who am innocent of all sin—*Me*, who came for the salvation of the world: if it has hated *Me*, therefore, still more will it hate you. *It hated Me before it hated you.*² *Before*, for Toletus.
Faber Stap.

¹ I. e. *hath hated* (μίσσηκεν). “The Lord was speaking of a fact that had lasted up to the time He spake.”—*Malan*.

² “Πρῶτον ὑμῶν. Cyril, Cajetan, and Cocceius would translate these words ‘principem vestrum,’ and Calvin

preferred this—that Christ, though the greatest and highest, and so far above them, nevertheless escaped not the enmity of the world. But we hold fast, with the Syriac, the Vulgate, Nonnius, and most others, the more simple view: I have *gone before* you

Toletus.

Gerhard.

Lampe.

Gorranus.

Guillaud.

John iii. 2.
Lampe.

though the path in which He bids His disciples walk be full of danger and suffering, yet had He trodden it first Himself. And it is not active persecution of which He speaks, but inward hatred, in whatsoever ways it may manifest itself, since He was speaking not merely of those who had power to injure by the sufferings to which they could subject the bodies of His disciples; but he refers to all those who were at enmity with Him, and would show that enmity by the hatred manifested towards His followers.¹

The hatred of the world towards His disciples was something which was future. At present they knew but little of this, since He was with them, and this led to the concentration of the world's hate upon the Master, so that but little flowed over to His disciples. Their weakness, indeed, their timidity under persecution, their shrinking from the sufferings which studded the path of their Lord, had secured them from a large measure of the world's hatred. Hereafter they were to be strengthened to resist evil, and made bold to encounter the reproaches and persecutions of men, and then should they experience the full measure of the world's enmity. Christ prepares them for this hatred and persecution by reminding them of the hatred which He had met with, the sufferings which He was enduring, telling them—

1) That the hatred and suffering which they shall endure would be of the same kind as that with which men had visited Him,

(2) That this must needs be their lot, since what the Head had suffered that also must the members likewise suffer; as therefore the Head of the Church could not enter into eternal glory, except through the road of the cross and of suffering, so does He console them in the midst of their troubles which awaited them by reminding them of the reward and the glory which lay beyond the sufferings of the world.

It hated Me before it hated you. Herod had raged against Him, and had tried to take away His life whilst He was an infant. Before His mission had commenced the testimony of the Baptist had directed the hatred of the Jews towards the Messiah, so that even at the very outset of His ministry Nicodemus came to Him by night for fear of the Jews.

in this, I have broken *this* path."—
Stier.

"Πρῶτον ὑμῶν, primum vestrum, qui primus sum vestrum, seu prior, quod est, dignior vobis: vel potius, prius quàm vos, Græco superlativo pro comparativo, et Latino comparativo loco

adverbii accepto."—*Luca Brugensis.*

¹ "Être du monde, et être Chrétien; être Chrétien, et être aimé du monde; ce sont deux paradoxes inouïs, deux propositions inalliables selon l'Évangile."—*Quesnel.*

In one sense, indeed, the Church is the whole world, and the whole world hates the Church; so that the world hates the world.¹ The world at enmity with God hates the world reconciled to God. The world condemned by sin hates the world which has been saved from sin. The world that is still polluted hates the world which has once been cleansed. Augustine.

(19) *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Wisd. ii. 12,
15, 20.
John xvii.
14.
Ephes. v. 13.
1 John iv. 5.

If ye were of the world—that is, were worldly—and loved the riches, the pleasures, the lusts, and honours of the world, it would love you because you were its *own*. The self-interest of the world, its loving only those who are its own, is here noted and contrasted with that love which led Christ to draw out of the world those who were not then His, being alienated from Him by evil hearts and evil works. *I have chosen you out of the world* by giving you commands and desires which separate between you and the world: *therefore the world hateth you*. Our Blessed Lord does not say merely it injures or fights against you, for this the world, the men of the world, do perpetually against those who are of the world; it only, however, hates those who are separated from it, and whose lives are a standing rebuke to the evil which is in the world. Not that even evil men knowingly and deliberately choose that which is evil, but, esteeming or calling evil good, they pursue it as their chief good; and yet even in the world itself, there is such an instinctive respect for that which is good, that it is not the goodness in the saints which is hated, but themselves—it *hateth you*. And it does so because, being good, they stand apart from the world, and reprove it silently by their conduct. Emman. 84.
Corn. & Lap.
Bengel.
Jansen Yp.
Lampe.
Salmeron.

The first test, the special mark and characteristic of those who love God, is this, that they love the children of God, their brethren, *one another*. Another test, but by no means one so useful to discover, is the hatred which the world bears them. This is not to be sought for, nor to be regarded; but when it comes, and when it is persisted in, we are to esteem it as a comfort that in it we have proof in addition to the other inward tests of love and holiness, that

¹ "Mundi nomine appellantur peccatores, quia dilectione mundi inhabitant mundum. Omnes dilectores mundi ipsi sunt mundus, habitatores mundi animo."—*Greg. lib. viii. Epist.* 46.

Stier.

we are not of the world.¹ Two cities began to be at the foundation of the world, at the creation of man—the city of God and that of the Evil One—and these have always been opposed the one to the other. Those who are the citizens of the New Jerusalem, the chosen of the firstborn, are hated by the dwellers in Babylon. It matters not, however, to those who live in the city of God, whether the citizens of Babylon hate them or not, provided only that they themselves are living in the *city which hath foundations*, and are sheltered by Him who is the Lord and the Light of that city.

Heb. xi. 10.
Ferus.

I have chosen you out of the world. By these words our Blessed Lord not only removes the thought from them that the world hated them because of anything in themselves, but He at the same time takes from them all idea of merit because of this hatred of the world. It does so only because of Christ's choice, because He had elected them to be lights of the world which should hate them.² Again, by reminding His disciples of this truth, He gives them a motive against returning the hatred of the world, in telling them that they themselves were once of it, and were only taken from it by the will and choice of another. We are not to hate that which is of the same nature as ourselves, however different may be its aim and purpose.

Gerhard.

Stier.

Let us ever remember that Christ has chosen us out of the world, not because we were just, but in order that He might justify us.

Estius.

But our Blessed Lord, in these words, not only gives us motives guarding us against returning the world's hate, He supplies us with the strongest incentives to patience under the enmity and persecution of this evil world.

Luca Brug.

(1) We are to endure the hatred of the world without repining, since we do but share it with Christ. It hates us only because it hates Christ.

(2) It is a matter of joy, and not of grief, to those who are persecuted. Because their conversation is not in accord-

¹ "Utrumque es mihi, Domine Jesu, et speculum patiendi, et præmium patientis. Utrumque fortiter provocat, ac vehementer accendit. Tu *doces manus meas ad prælium* exemplo virtutis Tuæ, Tu caput meum post victoriam Tuæ coronas præsentia majestatis, sive quia pugnanti Te specto, sive quia Te expecto non solum coronanti, sed et coronam: in utroque mirabiliter Tibi me allicis; uterque funis violentissimus ad trahendum."—Bernard, Hom. xlvii. in Cant. § vi.

² "Siquidem igitur fratres mei, à Deo estis, electi in peculiarem ejus populum, ne miremini mundum vos odisse, at bonum hoc signum esse judicate. Nam flores ab arbore repulso colligit pharmacopola, ex quibus salubria confecit medicamina: sic viros à mundo despectos recipit Deus et tanquam artifex peritissimus, cœleste quoddam conficit medicamen, quò postea ægris medetur, id est eorum exemplo alii peccatores curantur."—Ph. Diez.

ance with the maxims of the world; because the doctrines of Christ's Church are not similar to those of the world, the world hates the true disciples of Christ. So that if we had this world's love it would be a sign that we were sharers in the evil of the world.¹

Cajetan.
Chrysostom.

If we would be loved by the world, our Blessed Lord says we must be of the world; for the world loves only its own, and listens only to its own. This would, indeed, be evil. But even then the world would not love us, but only love itself in us; would love that portion of wickedness which we had made a part of ourselves. The love of the world is pure selfishness.²

1 John iv. 5.

Stier.

(20) *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord.³ If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also.*

Matt. x. 24.
John v. 18;
xiii. 16.

If—that is, as surely as the world has persecuted Christ, it will also persecute the followers of Christ. The men of the world did not keep our Lord's words, therefore we must not expect that they will keep the words of His members and ministers. Him they despised and rejected whilst he was on the earth, therefore will they despise and reject His followers;⁴ yea, they will do so the more, since *the servant is not greater than his lord.*

Bengel.

Luca Brug.

We learn here two things—

(1) That the hatred and persecution which Christ endured was not only because He was first in order of time, but because He was the *Lord* and Head of the Church; therefore should we rejoice under such trials, as being sharers with Him.

Stier.

(2) That the number of those who hear the Word is never the mark of the truth of any doctrine which is taught, nor any test of the faithfulness of the ministers of Christ.

Gerhard.

¹ "Sicut mare non potest ferre mortuos, sed in littus eisdem à se projicit; sic mundus non potest tolerare eos, qui sunt peccatis et mundo ipsi spiritualiter mortui."—*Gerhard.*

² "Similis simili gaudet, Sirac. iii. 19, 20, 'Ἡ ὁμοιότης ἐστὶ μήτηρ τῆς φιλόρητος, unde Joh. vii. *Non potest mundus vos odire.* Non quidem est dilectio sincera, sed mera φιλαντία, quia mundus, quod *suum* est in mundanis diligit, unde etiam dilectio hæc

non diutius perdurare solet, quam mundani instrumenta mundi impuro, ejus fini apta esse possunt. Diligit tamen mundus tales, quia iis cum lubentissime consuecit eosque piis longissime præfert."—*Lampe.*

³ Οὐκ ἐστὶ δούλος μείζων κυρίου αὐτοῦ.—"There is no servant that is greater than his Lord."—*Revised Version of Five Clergymen.*

⁴ "Qui in Deum impius est, quanto pius erit in proximum?"—*Ferus.*

We have in these words of our Blessed Lord an encouragement and rule for all His ministers. They are to sow the seed of the Word entrusted to them in faith. They are not to be daunted at apparent failure, nor to be discouraged though no fruit should be seen to result from their labours. The ingathering of the fruits must be left to God. The husbandman in God's vineyard is to act like the husbandman of earth, who is content to plough the ground and to sow the seed, and then to await the increase in the order of God's providence. Lest His Apostles should forget the lesson of nature, and grow weary when they found that comparatively few men were converted by their teaching, our Blessed Lord encouraged them by referring to His own example, since in His case the apparent failure was even greater than with them. When He hung on the cross, few were they who had been converted by His teaching, few who were found faithful. So has it ever been in His kingdom.¹ Of those whom Moses led out of Egypt, only two continued steadfast, and entered into the land promised to the whole of the children of Israel. In all ages, few are they who listen to the message of God; and hence Isaiah complained, *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain.*

Gulliaud.

Ferus.

Isa. liii. 1;
xlix. 4.Matt. x. 22;
xxiv. 9.
John xvi. 3.

(21) *But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me.*

Our Blessed Lord encourages His apostles to perseverance in the work of their mission, and to patience under the hatred of the world, by these considerations—

(1) That he had *before* endured the same hatred and sufferings.

(2) That whatever they might endure they would suffer not from any fault of their own, nor on their own account, but *for His name's sake.*

(3) That the injury which they should suffer from the hatred of the world would arise not only from its not knowing them and from not recognising the truth of the words which they uttered, but because of the world's alienation from, and ignorance of, the Father.

Tirinus.

Christ had before² told his disciples that they must expect

¹ "It is not fit that the Head should wear a crown of thorns, and the members sit upon cushions. Therefore let it not seem strange to you, for thus it

is with Me."—*Luther.*

² "The several repetitions which occur in this one discourse should stand as so many cautions to critics who are

to receive the same kind of treatment which He had endured, for *the servant is not greater than his lord*, and must share in His sufferings here. He goes here beyond this, and tells them, that whatever of the world's hate they should receive would be visited on them in reality because of Him and *for His name's sake*. Thus He warns them against returning hatred to those who hated them, since those who hate and persecute the members of Christ as such, hate and persecute Him, who, so far from returning their hatred when He was upon earth, died for them, and in dying prayed for His and their persecutors and murderers.

Tolotus.

Luca Brug.

The persecution of the world against the Church is because of *the name* of Christ, the doctrines which He taught and commanded His ministers to continue to teach, and also because of *the name* of Christ which they bear.¹ The world, but specifically the Jews, at the time of the beginning of the Christian Church, hated and persecuted Christ's followers, because of His *name*—

Lampe.

(1) By killing them they thought that they should be doing God—and therefore Christ Himself—a service.

(2) They persecuted Christians from hatred at the *name* of Christ. The wisdom of this world is not only alien from, but is ever at enmity with, the wisdom from above, and especially with Him who is *the wisdom of God*.

1 Cor. i. 24.

(3) They persecuted them because of Christ, hoping thereby to extinguish His name, and to destroy His remembrance from the earth.

Ferus.

They know not Him that sent Me. They knew not God; the evil of their lives had obscured all real knowledge of

in the habit of affirming that varied repetitions found in the different Evangelists are different accounts of the same words of our Blessed Lord imperfectly remembered, and, therefore, differently recorded by the Evangelists. For instance, the similarity of a portion of Christ's discourse in St. Luke (vi. 20-49) to that in St. Matthew (chapters v. vi. vii.), which is read as the Gospel for All Saints' Day, is hastily assumed by some critics as a proof that the two Evangelists are recording the same event; whereas such a canon of criticism would evidently fail when applied to the continuous address of Christ to His Apostles on the night of His betrayal. And if at the same time, and to the same hearers, our Blessed Lord repeats the self-same truth in almost

the same words, it is still more likely that He would have done so at various periods of His ministry, and when addressing different hearers.

¹ “Rogabis cur nomen Christi impiis odiosissimum est? Respondeo: *nomen* Christi est justitia et remissio peccatorum, quam non querit mundus, qui vitis deliciatur, et suam volens statuere justitiam non vult esse subjectus Deo. Rursus, *nomen* Christi est sapientia, quam prudentes hujus mundi tolerare nequeunt. Christi enim prudentia demonstrat ipsorum prudentiam esse stultitiam. Item *nomen* Christi est potentia, quam tyranni et potestates hujus mundi aversantur, dum illa impotentes et infirmi fiunt. Hoc loco *nomen* Christi significat quicquid de Christo dici potest.”—Guilliaud.

Matt. v. 8.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Salmeron.

Lampe.

Cyril.

God; for only by purity of heart can men see and know God. More especially had they lost all trace of that truth which is contained in the Fatherhood of God, for had they known this they would have known the Son. They knew not that it was He who had *sent* His Son into the world to redeem the world: they failed, therefore, to recognise the truth of the mission of the Son as the Messiah of God.¹ It was this ignorance of the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity which led to their rejection of Christ, and their hatred of Him and His disciples. They knew, indeed, from the writings of the Prophets, from the old traditions of their nation, that the Messiah was to be called the Son of God: they knew not, they had corrupted, obscured, and forgotten, the essential truth that He was to be really the Son of the nature—the Son consubstantial with the Father. Hence, we may note, our Blessed Lord does not simply say they know not the Father, *but they know not Him that sent Me*, implying that this was at the root, this was the source of their sin; they did not recognise God as the Father who would send the Son, and of whom the Son was by nature. The incarnation of Christ, the whole mystery of the Divine Paternity, and of the ever-blessed Trinity, was forgotten, and hence they knew not Him who had sent the Son into the world.

The consolations, then, which our Blessed Lord leaves to all His disciples in the midst of all their troubles as Christians are these—

(1) That he knows their sufferings. He has tasted of the same trials. He has endured like things from the hands of men before them. They do but follow Him and tread in His footsteps.

(2) They share with Him in all these sufferings. They have Him not only for their Master and Forerunner, but also for their companion. It is Christ whom the world really persecutes in the person of His members.

(3) They endure the world's hatred, they suffer perse-

¹ "Propter hoc Judæi excusserunt se à Deo, Verbum Ejus non recipientes, sed putantes per Seipsum Patrem sine Verbo id est sine Filio, posse cognoscere; Deum nescientes Eum qui in figura loquutus est humana ad Abraham et iterum ad Moysem, dicentem: *Videns vidi vexationem populi Mei in Ægypto, et descendi liberare eos.* Hæc enim Filius, qui est Verbum Dei, ab initio præstruebat, non indigente Patre angelis, uti faceret conditionem, et formaret hominem, propter quem et con-

ditio fiebat: neque rursus, indigente ministerio ad fabricationem eorum, quæ facta sunt, ad dispositionem eorum negotiorum, cuæ secundum hominem erant; sed habente copiosum et inerabile ministerium. Ministrat enim Ei ad omnia Sua progenies et figuratio Sua—id est, Filius et Spiritus Sanctus, Verbum et Sapientia; quibus serviunt et subjecti sunt omnes angeli." — *Irenæus*, lib. iv. c. 27, ed. Jo. Frob.; lib. iv. c. vii. § 4, ed. Benedict.

cution from the hands of the world, for Him.¹ Servants suffering from the hands of servants who had before hated and evil intreated their Lord. They stand by reason of these sufferings as the representatives of Christ. All these things come upon them *for His name's sake*. Ammonius. Ferus.

None of us can *know* God save practically, and through the medium of a holy life. Love, not intellect, is the key which unlocks all mysteries respecting God, and freedom from sin opens the eyes which were blinded by acts of impurity and wickedness. He who keeps the commandments of God, and he alone, has a real knowledge of God Barradius.

(22) *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.*² John ix. 41. Rom. i. 20. Jas. iv. 17.

The sin here referred to is not sin in the abstract, but the special sin of which the Jews were guilty in rejecting Him, and thus proving their unbelief in Christ.³ Other sins indeed, they had before His incarnation, for the whole nation had sunk into deepest sin before He came; but this sin of which they were guilty, and which was evidenced in their crucifixion of Christ, they could not have been guilty of except for His coming and for their rejection of Him. He gave them light whereby to know Him. He came Himself, *the True Light*, and they added to their other sins by turning away from the light, by preferring darkness, and by their rejection of Him. He *had come and spoken unto them*—that is, to the Jews—to whom He was sent, and before whom He did His wondrous works, and they added to their many other sins by their treatment of Him, for *they had not had this sin unless He had spoken*, and so left them without excuse for their sins.⁴ Hugo de S. Claro. Augustine. Salmeron. John i. 9. Gorranus. Augustine. Luca Brug.

¹ “Εἰ ἐγὼ ὑπὲρ τῶν δούλων ταῦτα ἔπαθον, ὅταν ὑμεῖς οἱ δούλοι περὶ τοῦ δεσπότου πάσχητε τὰ ὅμοια, οὐκ ὀφείλετε βαρέως φέρειν; Εἰ τὰ ὅμοιά μου πάθητε, μὴ θορυβῆσθε· οὕτω γὰρ γίνεσθε κοινωνοὶ τῶν ἐμῶν παθημάτων, καὶ πρὸς τιμὴν μὲν ὑμῶν τοῦτο ποιοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ δι’ ἐμοῦ εἰς τὸν πατέρα ὑβρίζουσι.”—Ammonius.

² “Nunc autem excusationem non habent de peccato suo; Græcè legitur πρόφασιν—id est, prætextum—qui plus est quam excusatio: significat enim colorem, vel speciem excusandi peccatum post tam manifestam prædicationem.”—Salmeron.

³ “Si non venissem, et locutus eis non fuisset; id est, si non ostendissem Me personaliter, et eos personaliter non docuissem peccatum non haberent. . . . Non loquitur hic Dominus de quocunque peccato, sed de peccato infidelitatis, quod non credunt in Christum, quod autonomastice peccatum dicitur, quia isto peccato existente nullum aliud peccatum remitti potest, cum nullum peccatum remittitur nisi per fidem Jesu Christi, per quam est justitia.”—Th. Aquinas.

⁴ “Non haberent peccatum impietatis, qua et Me et vos persequuntur; et infidelitatis, qua non credunt in Me:

If I had not come and spoken unto them. Here we have the benefit and effects of Christ's incarnate life.

(1) He who is God had *come* to this earth, had taken man's nature upon Him, and had made it possible for man to do the will of the Father. He had come as man's Redeemer from sin.

Salmeron.

John vii. 46.

Luca Brug.

(2) When He came, He taught men heavenly wisdom. He was not only the Redeemer of man, but also the Great Teacher of the world. He came, and Himself spake, not as of old, by the mouth of the prophets, but by His own lips, speaking as never man had spoken, and declaring that He was indeed the Christ, the Messiah, in whom all things written in the law and the prophets were fulfilled.

Guillaud.

They have no cloke for their sin—no excuse, no pretext for sinning, which is emphatically spoken of as *their own sin*, since sin is the effect of the free-will of the sinner. Our Blessed Lord had before shown that they who hated Him were ignorant also of the Father; here He shows that, so far from being excusable for this rejection of Him because of this ignorance, they were but the greater sinners, inasmuch as this ignorance had its origin in the wilful rejection of Him who had come to give them knowledge. The sins which had blinded their hearts led them to reject Him; but this last act of sinfulness only manifested the wickedness in which they had long indulged. Here note, that Christ takes away the grounds of excuse from all classes of those who rejected Him.

Salmeron.

(1) His words spoken, His doctrines, His reasoning from the Scriptures, should have convinced the Pharisees and doctors of the law that He was indeed the Messiah, since He was ever arguing from the law, and appealing to their own professed principles.

(2) His works done in the sight of all men—His whole incarnate life from the time when He *had come* into, and had manifested himself to the world, and His miracles of mercy and healing should have convinced even those whose intellects were dull, and whose reasoning powers were feeble—the great mass of the people—that He was indeed the Messiah, the very Christ.

Toletus.

1 John ii. 23.

(23) *He that hateth Me hateth My Father also.*

This is so, since—

hoc peccatum non illis imputaretur : non quod aliis non laborarent peccatis, mendacio, odio proximi, aut alio ejus generis, sed leviùs perirent, nimirum ab hoc incredulitatis crimine liberi, cujus accessio magnam sarcinam addet

eorum exitio."—Guillaud. "Peccaverant Judæi antequam Christus à cœlo descenderet, sed non peccaverant peccato incredulitatis in Christum."—Jo. Arboreus.

(1) In hating the Son they hated Him who is ever one with the Father,¹ for they who are united in identity of nature are reached at by the same worship or rejection. Guillaud.

(2) They hated the Son because of the doctrines which He taught; but He taught nothing of Himself, and did nothing by His own power distinct from that of the Father; He taught at all times the words and did the works of the God-head; so that, in hating the one or the other, they must needs hate the Father.

(3) The Son was the *express image* of the Father, so that in hating Him for His virtues, they hated the Father, whose virtues also they were. Heb. i. 3.
Lampe.

He, then, that hates Christ hates also the Father, since there is nothing in Christ which can be hated save the virtues and the image of God. For though men by nature desire that which is good—and God is infinite and essential goodness, and the fountain of all good to man, so that it may seem impossible to hate Him who is man's highest good, as, indeed, it is impossible so to hate without a violation of man's own nature—yet in His works, His commandments, His requirements, we may and do hate Him when, choosing our own corrupt will and inclinations, we violate those laws which are not only our good, but the manifestation of God's will to us.² Salmeron.

(24) *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father.* John iii. 2;
vii. 31;
ix. 32.
Acts ii. 23;
x. 33.

If I had not done among them (in eis)—in their presence, before their eyes, in their hearts; for it was His work which touched their hearts, and would have healed them had they not sinned afresh by rejecting His salvation, and casting Him out of their hearts.³ If I had not done among them (in eos)—towards them, for their special benefit—the works which none other man did, they had not done this great sin; they had not, against light and against that knowledge which was offered them, and which they might have retained, rejected Him. Toletus.
Konigsteyn.

Augustine.

¹ See Commentary on St. Philip and St. James's Day, pp. 326 327 of this volume.

² "Deum, inquantum Deus est, nullus potest odio habere; cum Deus sit pura essentia bonitatis, quæ cum sit secundum se diligibilis, impossibile est quod secundum se ab aliquo odiatur. Potest tamen aliquis Deum odio habere secundum aliquid aliud: puta, qui a . . ."

voluptatem, odit Deum ut prohibentem voluptatum frutiones: et qui quærit impunitatem, odit Dei justitiam punientem."—*Th. Aquinas.*

³ Εἰ τὰ ἔργα μὴ ἐποίησα ἐν αὐτοῖς. "Notanter dicit *in eis*; quia non solum inter eos vel coram eis, sed prorsus *in eis*, quia eos sanavit."—*Konigsteyn.*

These works were such as *none other man did*—

(1) The deeds which our Blessed Lord did were such as *none other man did*, inasmuch as when the prophets wrought miracles, they did so by the might and power of another, not in their own strength. What He did was done by the power of Godhead inherent in Himself:¹

Luca Brug.

John ix. 32.
Hardouin.

Numb. xx.
10, 11.

(2) They were greater and more numerous than any works done by Moses or by any other of the prophets and patriarchs, for *since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.*² The deeds of our Blessed Lord were free, also, from the admixture of human infirmity and passion which mingled with many of the miracles of the human messengers of the Father—as, for instance, when Moses struck the rock in impatience at the waywardness of the children of Israel.

(3) But the words seem to refer, also, to the pretenders to the Messiahship who appeared in the time of our Blessed Lord—Theudas, Judas of Galilee, and others—who did no such works of mercy, no such significant deeds, as those which Christ did.

Luca Brug.

They had seen the Father in seeing the Son; they had been witness to the power of the Father in seeing the miracles of the Son; and in hating the Son because of His works, they hated the Father whom the Son, by these works, revealed to them.

Ps. xxxv. 19;
lxi. 4.
John x. 34;
xii. 34.

(25) *But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause.*

Emman. 84.

That the word might be fulfilled: that is, this has happened not in order that the word might be fulfilled, but that thus, in this way, the word is fulfilled.³

¹ Τα ἔργα δ' οὐδεὶς ἄλλος πεποίηκεν.
“Spectabilia erant et singularia: quia non prece, vel solo contactu, ut prophetæ fecerunt quandoque, sed imperio: *Obmutesce*, inquit, *et exi ab eo* [Luc. iv. 35]; *Lazare, veni foras* [Joan. xi. 43]; interdum etiam sine contactu aut præsentia; unde servum centurionis, filium reguli, et filiam Chananæ absentes sanitati restituit.”—*Salmeron*.

² “Fecit in eis opera quæ nullus alius fecit in curatione infirmorum: et hoc in tribus. *Primo* quidem in magnitudine: quia mortuum quatrIduanum suscitavit, cæcum natum illuminavit,

quod a sæculo non est auditum. *Secundo* in multitudine: quia omnes quotquot in se habebant, curabat, ut dicitur Matt. xiv. 14, 36. *Tertio* in modo: quia alii faciebant invocando, ostendentes se non propria virtute facere, sed Christus faciebat imperans quia propria virtute. Marc. i. 27.”—*Th. Aquinas*.

³ “*Ut impleatur non causa finalis significatur sed consecutio; q. d. atque ita impletum est.*”—*Emman. 84*. “*Ut non causam sed eventum significat.*”—*Mariana*.

They hated Me without a cause. These words (ἐμίσησάν με ὧρεάν) occur in the Book of Psalms in several places, and point to the causeless malignity of the enemies of Christ: *Let not them that are mine enemies triumph over me ungodly, neither let them wink with their eyes that hate me without a cause* (οἱ μισοῦντές με ὧρεάν, Sept.). Again, *They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head.* And again, *They compassed me about also with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.* The law is a general name applied also elsewhere, by our Blessed Lord, not to the Books of Moses only, but to the Psalms also, and seemingly to the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures;¹ as, for instance, when He said, *Is it not written in your law, I said Ye are gods?* where, as in the present case, the quotation is made from the Book of the Psalms.

Ps. xxxv. 19,
P. B. Vers.

Ps. lxi. 4.

Ps. cix. 3.
Hengsten-
berg.John x. 34.
Lampe.

They hated Me without a cause—that is—

(1) From pure malice, from their own perverse sinfulness, and the corruption of their heart, notwithstanding that Christ gave them *no cause*, and did all His wondrous works in such a manner as should have removed their misconceptions of Him.

Toletus.

(2) *Without a cause*—without His returning hatred for hatred. They hated Him notwithstanding the patience with which He endured all their taunts, the meekness with which He saw the signs of men's malice, and the sufferings which He endured from their wickedness.

Barradius.

This was even the confession of Pilate; *I find in Him no fault at all. For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him.*²

John xviii.
38.
Matt. xxvii.
18.

(26) *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me:*

Luke xxiv.
49.
John xiv. 17,
26; xvi. 7,
13.
1 John v. 6.

And now, lest His Apostles should shrink from the prospect of evil, and faint at the sight of those tribulations which should come upon them when their Master was no longer

Stier.

¹ "The Apostle taketh the law at large for all the Scriptures. Tell me, you that are under the law, have you not read in the law [Gal. iv. 21], &c., and then cites a place out of Genesis, before the law was given."—*Donne's Essays*, p. 233 (ed. 1855).

² "Invidiæ est proprium gratis, et sine causa odio persequi. Si roges

invidiam, cur odio habes proximum? Nunquid injuriam intulit, rem familiarem deprædatus est, vulneravit, aut aliqua alia in re nocuit? Respondebit, si vere respondere voluerit, Nulla in re nocuit; habet igitur odio gratis; quia non est illi proximi felicitas grata."—*Barradius*.

visibly with them, Christ directs their thoughts to what should be their strength and consolation — the abiding presence of the Comforter, whom He promises to send on His departure from the earth.

Chrysostom.

John xiv. 6.

Alex. Nat.

Toletus.

Whitby.

John xiv. 26.

Luca Brug.

The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, the third person in the ever-blessed Trinity, is here called the Spirit of Truth, because He came as a witness of the Truth; and to impress upon the minds of the disciples that what He should witness would be true, the truth. Christ calls Him not here the Holy Spirit, that is, the Spirit of Holiness, but of Truth.¹ He is so called for various reasons.² He is the One True Real Primal Spirit; He is the Spirit of Christ, who is *the Truth*; He is the Spirit, who, knowing infallibly what is true, will manifest and teach all truth to the Apostles, and will bear witness to and confirm the doctrines of Christ, which are true and enduring as opposed to the shadows and types of the Mosaic law, and to the temporary character of the whole ceremonial law.

Whom I will send. The sending here refers not to the Eternal spiration, or procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father, but to His mission for the special purpose of comforting and informing the minds of the Apostles of Christ. For this purpose our Blessed Lord promises to *send* Him; for although the Holy Spirit comes to us of His own will and freely, yet since He derives all will, since He derives His nature itself from the Father, and is sent unto us equally by the Father and the consubstantial Son, what He does He does from them. In another place our Blessed Lord says of *the Holy Ghost* that the Father will send Him in the name of the Son, as here He says that He Himself will send Him — not implying by this that there would be two sendings, two missions of the Spirit of Truth, but asserting by this variation that what is done by the Father to man, that also is done by the Son.

Which proceedeth from the Father.

The Holy Spirit goes out from the Father,³ but in such a

¹ "Ὅταν δὲ ἔλθῃ ὁ Παράκλητος, ἑκείνος ἀξιόπιστος ἔσται, Πνεῦμα γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀληθείας· διὰ τοῦτο οὐ Πνεῦμα ἅγιον, ἀλλ' ἀληθείας αὐτὸ ἐκάλεσε." — Chrysostom.

² See the Gospel for Whit-Sunday (*Commentary*, vol. ii. pp. 190, 191, Third Edition).

³ "Ἐκπορεύεται, *proceedeth*. Rev. xxii. 1: *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal*,"

proceeding out of (ἐκπορευόμενον) *the throne of God and of the Lamb*. Separation from the person or thing from which the procession takes place is not always denoted by this verb [even when it refers to material things]; e. g. in the Sept. Exod. xxv. 35: *According to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick* — τοῖς ἐκπορευομένοις ἐκ τῆς λυχνίας." — Bengel.

way as not to be separated from Him, since He, like the only-begotten Son, abides with Him for ever. And He is said especially to proceed from the Father, since from the Father, the source of Godhead, He has His essence,—that is, His eternal nature; and He who from eternity so proceeded from the Father, came in time into the world, and manifested His coming by His operation on the hearts of the Apostles and disciples of Christ, and by the gifts which, from Christ, He gave unto men, being sent for this end by the Father and the Son. As to His Person, He—since He is God—was and is ever present in the world.

Didymus de
S. Sancto.

Toletus.

Ephes. iv. 8

Lampe.

Our Blessed Lord here says that He will send the Spirit to them, and that He will send that Spirit from the Father. In these words we have the whole mystery of the ever-blessed Trinity. The Son sends, whereas before He had said that the Father would send, showing thereby His own co-equality with the Father. The Holy Spirit is said to be sent at this time, because He comes in a new manner, and for a new purpose. In the same way the Son is said to be sent, because though He was ever present in the world, yet by the joint act of the whole Three Persons in the Godhead He became present in a new manner, sent by the Father, incarnate by the Holy Ghost, and yet Himself freely taking our nature and becoming man. The Father, as the Source or Principle of the other Two Persons, is never said to be sent; this is spoken exclusively of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In these words we have two truths implied—

Jans. Gand.

(1) He that is sent from or by another is in either case said to proceed from that other.

(2) Procession implies external operation, visible action, and an object for which the person proceeds. The Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father not only by coming into the world at this time, which He did for this object, for man's sanctification, but anterior to this by the fact of His own eternal nature.¹

Toletus.

The Holy Spirit *proceedeth from the Father*—therefore He is God. For He that eternally proceeds from another must needs be of the same nature as that other from whom He proceeds.² Hence it is that He is spoken of as the Spirit of

¹ "This is the only place in which the verb *ἐκπορεύεσθαι*, which has become a symbolic term, is applied to the Holy Spirit. The word is very expressive; the idea it conveys is founded upon the metaphor of a stream that issues from the throne of God, under which figure the communication

of the Spirit is frequently represented. Compare Rev. xxii. 1 with Ezek. xlvii. 1, where the Seventy have the very term *ἐκπορεύεσθαι* for *ἔξω*.—*Olshausen on the Gospels and Acts.*

² In English the words "procession" and "proceeding from" are often used both of the eternal procession of the

Truth—the Spirit of Him who is Essential Truth. He is the Consoler, the Comforter; addressing not the ear only, but the heart, and consoling men especially with the comforting truths of God who is Love. In declaring that He will send Him, the Son asserts His own equality and the consubstantiality of His nature with that of the Father, who is also spoken of as sending the same Comforter at the same time and for the same objects—the strengthening, the consolation, and the instruction of the Apostles of Christ. And though the Holy Spirit is elsewhere promised as an abiding Comforter to the Church of Christ, yet here the promise refers specifically to the twelve Apostles and to the immediate disciples of our Blessed Lord, since He was to come in order to supply to them the place of their Incarnate Lord, and to comfort them in the midst of their persecutions from the enemies of Christ, in their trouble at the departure of Christ and at the removal of His visible presence from amongst them.

Salmeron.

He shall testify of Me.

The Holy Spirit does this in various ways:—

(1) By His influence on the hearts of the faithful. The testimony which the Spirit of God gives to man's spirit, testifying that through Christ's atonement he is reconciled to God.

Rom. viii. 16.

(2) By His works—the miracles which He enabled the Apostles and others to do for the glory of Christ, and in testimony of the truths which He had declared.

Janr. Gand.

(3) He should not only testify unseen to the hearts of the disciples, but He should strengthen them to bear witness publicly to those truths which they understood not fully until they had received the gifts of the Spirit, and were endued with power from on high.

Gorranus.

(4) To the world, as well as to the Apostles, the Holy Spirit testified to the truth of Christ's words by the conversion of so many who yet had witnessed unmoved the crucifixion of the Saviour

(5) By the evident confusion of the adversaries of Christ,

Holy Spirit and of His temporal mission when sent forth as the Comforter into the hearts of God's people. In the theological language, however, of the Church of the East, distinct words are used for those two facts, and to proceed (*ἐκπορεύεσθαι*) is limited to the consequence of the eternal operation of the Father, whereas to send (*πέμπειν*) is

used when speaking of the temporal mission from the Father and the Son, of which S. Chrysostom says, “*Ἰδοὺ, οὐχ ὁ Πατὴρ μόνος, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ Υἱὸς ἐστίν, ὁ πέμπων.*” See note in Commentary on the Sunday after Ascension Day (vol. ii. pp. 181—183, Third Edition).

and by the power and efficacy of that word which the Holy Spirit in the moment of trial put into the mouths of these weak and unlearned men. Lampe.

In this promise of Christ to His Apostles, we may learn these several truths:—

(1) That in the Godhead there is a distinction of Persons. He who proceeds from another and He from whom He proceeds, He who sends that other from Himself and He who is sent, must needs be distinct in their personality.

(2) The consubstantiality of the Father and the Holy Spirit; for He who proceeds from the substance of another must needs be of the same substance as that other.

(3) The distinction observed between the genesis of the Spirit and of the Son. The Son is declared to be begotten—the only-begotten of the Father: the Holy Spirit is simply said to proceed from the Father, but is never spoken of as begotten. John i. 14.

(4) We may see here the threefold work of the Holy Spirit, the objects for which He comes into the world: to comfort the hearts of God's people in every time of trouble—to bestow on them the gifts of Divine grace—to manifest the truth of Christ's doctrines. Toletus.

(27) *And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.*

*Ye also shall bear witness,*¹ as those who obey the guiding hand and are actuated by the Holy Spirit, whose temples ye are; for no one can testify of Christ unless they have the Spirit of Christ. The testimony of man, indeed, is different from that of the Spirit, though it may be in accordance with it. The Spirit moves, the Spirit gives power and utterance, and man bears testimony in his works to the truth of the Gospel, not indeed by any necessity of his nature, but by witnessing to Christ in the giving up of his will. In divers ways did the Apostles testify of Christ before the world—not by their teaching only, but by their lives also, and by their personal charity, that love to the brethren which struck men with wonder as an accustomed sight, and showed that

Luke i. 2;
xxiv. 48.
Acts i. 8, 21,
22; ii. 32;
iii. 15;
iv. 20, 33;
v. 32; x.
39; xiii. 31.
1 Pet. v. 1.
2 Pet. i. 16.
1 John i. 1, 2.

Salmeron.

Toletus.

¹ Or "ye also are witnesses," which agrees with the paraphrase of Nonnius and the commentary of Euthymius. S. Cyril, however, takes μαρτυρεῖτε in a future sense: "Τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας . . . μαρτυρήσει περὶ ἑμοῦ."

μαρτυρήσει δὲ πῶς; ἐνεργῆσαν γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν μάρτυς ἔσται δίκαιός τε καὶ ἀληθής, μαρτυροῦντος ἑ τοῦ Πνεύματος, συνεπιμαρτυρήσετε, φησὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς αὐτοί.—Quoted in *Malan on the Gospel of St. John.*

Salmeron.

they who had been with Christ had drunk in of His Spirit, who is Love.

The witness, or testimony, of the Apostles was of various kinds. They testified—

Ferus.
Isa. xl. 2.

(1) By their strength, who had hitherto been weak; their boldness, who had hitherto been timid. Their strength came to them as the gift of the Spirit, who was thus to them a *Spirit of might*.

(2) By the manner of their teaching, the fervour and persuasiveness of their discourses.

(3) By their wondrous deeds—the miracles which they wrought in Christ's name and by His strength.

(4) By the success of their mission—by the number of souls who were brought into the Church through their instrumentality.

Lampe.

(5) By their death, in which they glorified God, thus sealing the truth which they had taught during their lives; the testimony which they gave by their deaths, in which they proved the sustaining power of the doctrines and the presence of Christ.¹

1 Cor. vi. 17.

If we would, like the first disciples of our Blessed Lord, bear witness before an evil world to the truths which Christ taught, our spirits must be wholly unblameable. Let us strive then that our spirit, inflamed by the Spirit from above, be a spirit of truth and of holiness in order that it may truly *bear witness* for a God of holiness and of truth. Let us remember that our spirit must proceed from the Father and the Son, though it be not of their nature; and that if we in our spirit and by our actions are one with God, then shall our spirit be one with His—for *He that is joined unto the Lord is One Spirit*. Our spirit will, indeed, be a spirit of truth and of holiness if it abhor falsehood, dissimulation, and deceit, and if we be pure in life and in doctrine as we are in profession—meek in the sight of God, and righteous in the eyes of men. It will proceed from the Father, if it have His grace, and if it be pure through His purity—*pure even as He is pure*. It will proceed from the

1 John III. 3.

¹ "Nostrum est non tantum lingua, sed etiam moribus, de fide et lege Christi testimonium reddere; non remissè et ad tempus sed constanter et dum vivimus; et maximè operam dare ne perditis ac scelestis moribus testimonium contaminemus. Et quanquam olim Spiritus Sanctus testaretur mysterium in linguis, nunc autem solis fructibus et signis externi Sui adventus,

quæ sunt certiora signa, quia dæmon non potest ea comminisci. Quod Spiritus Sanctus et Angelicus testatur de Christo, cur quæso erubescat spiritus humanus? cum præsertim comminatus sit Christus: *Qui Me erubescit et Meos sermones, hunc Filius hominis erubescet cum venerit in maiestate et Patris et sanctorum angelorum.* Salmeron.

Son also, if it be a spirit of wisdom, and will in all things *bear witness* for Christ if it be adorned with all Christian graces, so that all men may be forced to take note of us that we have indeed *been with Jesus*. Salmeron.
Acts iv. 13.

*** “ Benignissime Domine Jesu Christe, bonorum omnium largitor, qui cum Patre Christianorum cordibus Sanctum Spiritum infudisti, quo eos instrueres confortaresque sanctæque Ecclesiæ vitam donares, atque in unitate conservares, rogamus Te ut eundem Spiritum Tuæ largiaris reipublicæ, quo et in unitate fidei concordēs efficiantur et in divino Tuo servitio ferventes. Infunde etiam Illum in corda sacerdotum catholicorumque doctorum, ut Illius splendore illuminati doctè fervidèque Christianam plebem erudiant. Quin et omnes passim Christianos Ejus præsidio corrobora, non solum per baptismi sacramentum verum, etiam per divinum Tuum amorem, cœlestiumque mandatorum observationem, ut ita tres

sanctissimæ Trinitatis Personæ in nos unanimiter descendant ac nobiscum simul habitent: Patre nobis largiente invictum animi robur, quoque mala declinemus et bona viriliter peragamus; Te, vero Dei Filio, sapientiam discretionemque in verbis factisque supeditante; Spiritu Sancto autem ferventem charitatem pacisque internæ tranquillitatem infundente. Quærit namque princeps hujus mundi perdere nos. Verum Tua divinitate nos tuente non est quod ullatenus formidemus. Ne ergo destituas nos Tua optata præsentia, amantissime Domine Jesu, qui verus existens Deus regnas cum Patre ac Spiritu Sancto per infinita sæcula sæculorum. Amen.”—Coster.

ALL SAINTS' DAY.

ST. MATTHEW v. 1—12.¹

Mark iii. 12. (1) *And seeing the multitudes, He went up in mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him:*

Our Blessed Lord had these places to one or other of which He was wont to resort when He would withdraw Himself somewhat from the crowd, either for prayer alone, or in order to address the *multitudes* with greater solemnity—in the desert, the ship, the mountain, and the Garden of Gethsemane, where He not only withdrew Himself in His agony before His crucifixion, but where He was wont *oftentimes* to resort *with His disciples*. Almost all commentators have dwelt upon the typical fitness of the mountain-top for the delivery of this discourse—for the giving of the New Law to man. The high and solemn nature of this sermon of Christ, in which He withdrew the minds of His hearers from earth and raised them to heaven, seemed to be fitted to the place from which it was delivered. Again, in the selection of the mountain for the delivery of this Sermon of Christ's there appears a certain parallel suggested between the promulgation of the Old Law, which was made from the top of Sinai, and the giving of the New Law from the top of the Mount of Beatitudes.²

¹ See note at end of this Gospel as to the sameness of the sermon in St. Matthew with that in St. Luke.

² Mr. Hamilton, in "Sinai, the Hedjaz and Soudain," pp. 31 and 32, contrasts the scenery of the Mount of Beatitudes with that of Sinai. The latter he thus describes: "From this highest point, where the Hebrew law was given, which is little more than twenty feet in diameter, the view, especially to the north and west, pre-

sents a countless succession of peaks without a trace of vegetation; to the east runs a long, broad wadi; beyond which, ranges of bronze-colored mountains, succeeded by hills and of yellow sand. It is not, however, the lines of mountain-tops, nor the long expanse of desert which it embraces, but the scene immediately at his feet, which impresses the beholder. Long ridges of arid rock surround him in chaotic confusion on every side.

Our Blessed Lord then *went up into the mountain* (εἰς τὸ ὄρος¹)—

(1) Not, as some have said, that He might avoid the multitude, but that He might teach them with the greater ease. He went not that He might look on them, but that they might see and mark Him, and that in speaking this summary of the new law, He might be seen and heard by large numbers of the people. Menochius.

(2) There seems in this ascension to the top of the mountain a significant reference to the example of Moses, to whom He was *like*, who went up into Mount Sinai to receive the law which he was to deliver to the people. Paulus de Palacio.
Dent. xviii.
15.

(3) By this action our Blessed Lord prepared the minds of *the multitudes* to receive His words, and showed them that He was about to deliver no commonplace discourse, and to utter no trivial truths, but matters of the greatest importance to the salvation of the soul. Ferus.

(4) In going up into the mountain, Christ taught us by a lively figure that when we would dwell in our minds upon the things of heaven, we should seek retirement, and in quiet withdrawing ourselves from worldly cares rise above the level of earthly things.

But though there is a certain resemblance between the circumstances under which the Old Law was given and that under which the New, the Evangelical Law, was made known to mankind, there are significant points of difference between the one and the other event, as there are between the laws themselves—

(1) The first appealed to fear; the second is founded on love.

(2) The first was in many parts obscure, so that the

sharp broken peaks of granite far and near are all equally desolate. Mighty floods seem once to have burst over the mountain-tops, breaking them like potsherds, filling the valleys below with huge boulders, in their furious course depositing no fertile soil." At p. 19, speaking of the same mountain, Mr. Hamilton had said: "The scenery is most terribly grand; no description could do justice to its general effect. The bare rocks rise on every side in long succession, fantastically coloured—grey, red, blue, bright yellow, and bronze—sometimes strangely marked with white lines of quartz or black bands of basalt. It may almost be said that Sinai explains Judaism. How

unlike the fertile downs and smiling shores which surround the teeming waters of the Sea of Galilee, where the later and more easy revelation was made!"

¹ Unto the mountain country: "Not any particular hill, but the neighbouring mountain country." — *Forshall*. "Montem quem nostis." — *Fritzsche*. "The mountains embosoming the lake of Galilee; a form of expression most natural to persons familiar with the country, but strictly correct on their part only in addressing others who were so too. Compare ch. iv. 18, v. 1, with Mark iii. 7—13." — *Green's Grammar of New Testament Dialects*, quoted in *Scrivener on St. Matthew*.

spiritual meaning of its requirements was the more easily forgotten; the second is clear and manifest.¹

(3) The first dwelt chiefly on temporal promises; the latter on spiritual. The first was but the schoolmaster leading to and preparing men for Christ

Gal. III. 24.

And as the substance of the law of Moses differed from the Gospel which Christ was now about to declare, so the circumstances of promulgation differed in the one case from that of the other—

(1) When God gave the law from the top of Sinai, we read that He *descended* to make known His will. When Christ, however, gave the new law to man, *He went up*. God descended to give earthly laws—He ascended to make known His spiritual commandments.²

Exod. xix. 18.

(2) The first law was given amidst signs of terror—*thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud*; the Gospel was declared by the mouth of the Only-Begotten Son in calmness and peace, and with the *still small voice* of blessing and of consolation.

Exod. xix. 18.

Gorranus.

John Norris.

(3) When the Old Law was given from Sinai, the people were prohibited from approaching the mountain; when the new law, however, is declared, all men are not only allowed, they are invited to come near.

Chromatius.

There was this likeness, however, between the Old and the New Law. As God gave to Moses the Ten Commandments, which were afterwards enforced and explained to the people by Moses, so here does our Blessed Lord give the new covenant to His Apostles in these eight Beatitudes, which afterwards He explained at large to them, in order that they, after His ascension, might unfold their meaning to the people amongst whom they were to teach the truths of Christianity.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

It is evident that *the multitudes* went up with Christ into

¹ "Montem conscendit, ut legem ferret; nam omnia ferè insignia Christi gesta in monte peracta sunt: veluti incarnatio in Nazareth, quæ super montem sita erat: præsentatio in templo in Monte Sion posito: jejunium tentationesque dæmonis in montibus factæ: orabat in monte Dominus: saturavit turbam in monte: transfiguratus fuit in monte: solemnem introitum in die Palmarum per Montem Oliveti transeundo confecit: sedente verò Eo super Montem Oliveti, sermonem propheticum et longum de excidio Jerusalem ac signis adventus Sui ad judicium

habuit, Matthæi xxiv. 3. Ac ut olim in monte immolare jussus est Abraham Isaac filium suum; ita crucifixus Dominus est in Monte Calvaria, à quo non longè distat sepulchrum: apparuit discipulis suscitatus in monte Galilee: ex Monte Olivarum ascendit in montem cœli empyrei: indeque rursus ad eundem montem rediturus creditur ad judicium." —*Salmeron*.

² "Descensus ad infima signat promissionem terrenorum factam in veteri lege; ascensus significat promissionem cœlestium factam in nova." —*Gorranus*.

the mount and heard His words, since we read at the close of the seventh chapter that when He *had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine*. It is clear, then, from the words at the beginning of St. Matthew's account of our Blessed Lord's sermon, in connexion with those at the close, that though the disciples were nearer the person of Christ than the rest of the people, yet that *the multitudes* were not absent—they stood, as it would seem, behind the immediate disciples of our Lord. For though these latter *came unto Him* as His chosen witnesses, as those who should report to others what He then declared, it was not to the exclusion of the crowds who flocked to hear His teaching, but only that the disciples might be nearer His person, that so they might the better bear in mind His will, the more easily record His words, and make known and interpret to others the great truths which He was about to declare.¹

Matt. vii. 28.

Estius.

Guilland.

Beaux Amis.

Christ saw *the multitudes*, and seeing them, saw before Him all mankind. He looked on them; for He was the Great Shepherd of mankind. He marked their wanderings in the ways of sin and unbelief, and came that He might draw them to Him, might teach them the good and right way, and gather them into His fold. He saw them; for He was the Good Samaritan. He marked them as they lay stripped of all their real possessions, wounded by the way-side of the world, and He came to bind up their wounds, and pour in the wine and oil of His mercy. He saw them; for He was the Great Physician. He marked the *wounds and bruises and putrifying sores* which covered the whole body of mankind. He compassionated the sufferings of men, and came that He might recover them of their leprosy, and might heal all their infirmities.² It was the sight of man's need which moved the heart of the Incarnate One with compassion, and led Him to earth. It was the sight of the same need of the same *multitudes* which led Him to go *up into a mountain* that He might give them the lessons of Eternal Wisdom.³ There He sat, the great Instructor of mankind,

Salmeron.

John x. 16.

Luke x. 34.

Isa. i. 6.

2 Kings v. 6.

Ps. ciii. 3.

Rapertus.

¹ “Ὅταν δὲ ἀκούσῃς ὅτι ἐδίδασκεν αὐτοὺς, μὴ τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτὸν διαλέγεσθαι νόμιζε μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' ἐκείνων ἅπασιν.”—*Chrysostom in loco*. “Nemo potest in valle stare et de monte loqui: sed ubi stas, inde loquere; aut unde loqueris, ibi sta. Si in terra est animus tuus, ut quid de cælo loqueris? Si de cælo loqueris, in cælo consiste.”—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

² “*Videns ergo Jesus turbas, scilicet, intuitu miserationis, ascendit in montem.*

Videlicet, ut sciremus ad spiritualia negotia tractanda quietem, solitudinemque requiri. *Et cum sedisset, sedens utique sicut Doctor in cathedra, mansuetudine loquitur et suavissimo sermone auditorum corda permulcet.*—*Ph. Diaz*.

³ Καθίσαντος αὐτοῦ.—“*Sedere æternitatis est. Dominus in cælo, sedes Ejus, Ps. x. num. 5. Et Christus sedet ad dextram Patris, Marc. xvi. num. 19. Et sancti considant in*

Salmeron.

Guilland.

Paulus de
Palacio.

Bernard.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

seating Himself in the chair of the teacher, and by this formal act of sitting He showed to men the solemnity and importance of those truths which He was about to declare to them, and taught those who should hereafter be called to the chair of the teacher in His Church that their work was to be done calmly and enduringly, with the preparation implied by the act of seating themselves to it.¹ We seem to see Him sitting and crying to the whole world, O ye who have hitherto wandered in the ways of error, as sheep without a shepherd, and have walked in the false light of the sparks which ye yourselves have kindled, and yet seek for blessedness, learn from My mouth the lessons of Divine wisdom, and find rest and blessedness for your souls.² Whilst, however, *the multitudes* stood around Him, the *disciples came unto Him*, called by Him, and drawing nigh in person, but approaching still more in affection, with anxious hearts and ready minds, to hear and receive His teaching. But in these Beatitudes our Blessed Lord did not merely declare to His disciples the truths which they were to teach to others. In preparing them for their future mission, He taught them that if they would bear His message effectually to others, they themselves must first possess these blessings; that they must be pure in spirit; must mourn over the sins of others; must be meek and merciful towards others; pure in heart, and steadfast amidst the persecutions the world.³

(2) *And He opened His mouth, and taught them, saying,*

To open the mouth, according to the usage of Holy Scrip-

cœlestibus in Christo Jesu, ad Ephes. ii. num. 6. Sedet Dominus hic dum Suam legem promulgat; per quod indicat æternam futuram, et in æternum duraturam: *Ecce vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad finem sæculi* [Matt. xxviii. 20].—*Sylvira*.

¹ "Sedit divinus Magister, ut nos doceret prælatos assiduitate et cum tranquillitate ad animarum salutem attendere debere: siquidem hoc est unum ex præcipuis muneribus, quæ tenentur exhibere. Væ autem illis, qui lautissimè epulantur et bibunt, voluptatibusque lenter indulgent, quæ verò ad animarum salutem pertinent, vel non faciunt, vel celerrimè et quasi per transennam faciunt."—*Ph. Diez*.

² "Sedet ut ad Eum quem nec ipsi quidem angeli stantem attingere poterant etiam publicani et peccatores accedant."—*S. Bernard, Serm. 1 de om. Sanct.*

³ "Ubi sedet ad docendum Magister, accedunt discipuli et audiunt doctrinam. Insidet Deus Magister cordi tuo, aperis os suum per inspirationes: accede si vis esse discipulus, et ubi vocem ejus audieris, noli obdurare cor tuum. Estima doctrinam, quam tantus Magister, tradit. Statue te illi conformare potius quàm doctrinæ mundi et carnis. Beati pronuntiat eos, quos mundus et caro miseros. Deus non fallitur ergo mundus."—*Arancinus*.

ture, means simply to speak; but generally the phrase implies a beginning, either after some interval or with reference to some new subject, as, for instance, when we read, *After this Job opened his mouth*. There is, then, significance in these words applied to Christ, since now at length the fountain of living Truth is beginning to pour forth the waters of life; no longer as when *in time past* He spake by the mouth of the prophets, but speaking in *these last days* by His own lips. These words again seem to mark the difference between this discourse and other words of our Blessed Lord which St. Matthew has recorded.¹ This sermon comprises the whole Evangelical Law: other discourses are more limited in their scope; have their special reference to some particular sin; or were uttered to enforce some particular duty. But these words have no such limitation. They embrace the whole of practical divinity, they concern all men.² Hence it is that, at the close of this sermon on the mount, Christ says, *Whosoever heareth*—not My sayings in general, but specifically, *Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock*. *These sayings*—this sermon, which contains the sum and substance of the Gospel of blessing and peace, both present and future, which Christ came to declare to man.³

Menochius.

Job iii. 1.

Bengel.

Heb. i. 1, 2.

Cajetan.

Matt. vii. 24.

Beaux Amis.

In the blessings with which Christ commenced the declaration of the new law of His Church, there is a special reference to the chief snares of Satan and the maxims of the world:—

(1) Avarice: the thirst after worldly riches, which urges men to acquire and heap up earthly treasure, and is one of the chief causes of sin and disorder in the world. This is rebuked, and men are called from it by the declaration that not those who seek after riches, but those who are *poor in spirit*, shall possess that kingdom which endureth for ever.⁴

¹ “Seven, however, of the μακαρισμοί, or *predications of blessedness*, are *absolute*, declaring the condition of the godly, as far as regards themselves; two are *relative*, having respect to the conduct of men towards them. In both cases the *kingdom of heaven* is placed first, as embracing the whole of the beatitudes. All are enumerated in a most beautiful order. With these may be compared the matter and order of the eight woes, which are denounced by Christ against the Scribes and Pharisees, in chap. xxiii. 13-16, 23, 25,

27, 29 verses.”—Bengel.

² “*Aperuit os, idem est quod loquendi principium facere, sive significat alta, grandia, et profunda loqui.*”—Emman. *ab Incarnatione*.

³ “Every one of these graces hath matter of *present* blessedness in it. . . . There is also assurance of *future* blessedness to all those that have attained to these several graces.”—Hammond. Tract. Cat. book ii. § 1.

⁴ “Quamquam in unaquaque harum beatitudinum diversis nominibus præmium pronuntietur, semper intelligen-

(2) Worldly frivolity and joy, and the absence of concern because of our sins, and of mourning for our alienation from God, the means by which men are blinded to their real condition, these are checked by the assurance that those who mourn over their sins shall be comforted by the presence of the All-Consoler.

(3) The fashion of the world, which had long owned the rule of Satan, sanctified revenge, and looked upon anger and its consequences as noble and man-like. To this Christ offers a remedy, and promises that the meek shall inherit the earth.

(4) At the time of the incarnation, beyond all previous times, virtue and duty, and all that is comprised under the term *righteousness*, seemed forgotten amongst men. To this declension the next beatitude is addressed, and they who greatly desire, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, have the promise that they shall be filled.

(5) With the approval of revenge, and the forgetfulness of the great duty of love one towards another, the unmercifulness of the undisciplined heart had increased, and hence the declaration that the *merciful* shall always obtain *mercy*.

(6) The testimony of heathen writers is in accord with the glimpses given us in Holy Scripture of the corrupt state of the whole world, Gentile and Jewish, at the coming of Christ, and therefore the need which all men had to be reminded of the blessedness which is granted to *the pure in heart*.

(7) Again, since all sin leads naturally and inevitably to division and contention and strife, those who make peace and allay dissension have this promise, that *they shall be called the children of God*.

(8) And because so long as the present state of the world lasts, evil, and therefore the persecution of the good, will in one form or another continue, Christ would fortify the heart of His disciples by the promise of reward to those who endure unto the end, and hence tells them that *blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.

He opened His mouth—for at other times He taught the people without even this. He taught them by means of the actions of His incarnate life, not only by His words, but also by His deeds, for His miracles and other acts were full

dum est illud præmium quod in prima beatitudine pauperibus spiritu, et in ultima illis qui propter justitiam patiuntur promittitur, quoniam videlicet ipsorum est regnum cælorum. . . . Qui pauper spiritu est, qui mitis, qui misericors, qui luget, qui pacifi-

cus, beatus dicitur; non quod sit in regno felicitatis æternæ, sed quia gerit felicitatis in se imaginem et similitudinem civium beatorum, quandoquidem per semitas quibus in patriam cœlestem pervenitur ambulat."—*Soarez*.

of significancy and teaching to men, so that these words are not written superfluously, *He opened His mouth*—they point to the manner of His teaching at this time. He who had before opened the mouths of others, and spoken by angels, and had moved His prophets to declare His will to the people, now no longer has recourse to human means.¹ He who to those of old time had spoken out of the thick darkness, now speaks face to face, as man with man. He had become incarnate in order to teach men the knowledge of His will, and having already spoken by His acts,² He is now beginning that work of teaching which was one of the purposes for which He came into the world. In this our Blessed Lord teaches us the superiority and excellency of the new law, that it was not delivered to us by the message of an angel, neither uttered by the lips of His inspired prophets, but by the *mouth* of Incarnate God. He who in proof of His divine power was about to open the mouth of the dumb to speak His praise, now opens His own mouth. He who opens all mouths, who moves all hearts, needed not the prayer, *Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise*; for He who gives to all His ministers a mouth and wisdom, which all their adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist, had power of Himself, and by that power *He at this time opened His mouth*.

He taught *them*—not only, that is, all those who were then present, but all who shall hear these words until the end of the world; for unless He open His mouth, we also are without instruction as much as these *multitudes*. He it is who must give power to His written word if we are able to understand the things of His law.

(3) *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

As David begins the Book of Psalms with *Blessed*, so does Christ commence His teaching with that which all men desire, blessedness³ or happiness here in expectation, and enjoyment hereafter in unshaken possession.⁴

¹ "Aperiens os simul aperiebat cor et cœlum et Patris Sui pectus et omnes opes quas cœlum eatenus clauserat."—*Paulus de Palacio.*

² "Notatur hic in apertione oris profunditas dicendorum, apertio doctrinæ, reseratio secretorum, longitudo sermonis, exemplum instructionis."—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

³ "Nota in candelabro erant septem bractia, septem lucernæ, septem infusoria, et hæc sibi invicem subser-

vientia. Sic hic distinguuntur tria, scilicet, septem petitiones orationis Dominicæ, septem dona, septem beatitudines, quæ dicuntur virtutes quibus devenitur ad beatitudines. Et hæc sibi adaptantur. Per petitiones venit ad dona: per dona ad virtutes."—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

⁴ "Pauperes beati vocantur, hic in spe, et in futuro in re."—*Emm. ab Incarnatione.*

Barradius.

Forslall.

Euthymius.

Gregory
Mag. Mor
iv. 1.

Ferus.

Pet. Bless.

Ps. li. 15.

Luke xxi.
15.
Bernard.

Ferus.

Rupertus.

Prov. xvi. 19;
xxix. 23.
Isa. lvii. 15;
lxvi. 2.
Matt. xviii.
4.
Luke vi. 20.Emm. ab
Incarnat.

These words, let us remember, are addressed to all; they were not only spoken to Christ's immediate disciples, but were uttered by His mouth for us also; they were written for all ages, and for men of all climes. He does not say *Blessed are ye poor in spirit*, but *Blessed are all who are poor in spirit*; and so of the other seven. There is this distinction, however, to be noted between the first seven Beatitudes and the eighth—that the first seven are concerned with specific actions or the desire after them, the last is the promise of blessedness to those who, having attained by God's mercy to these seven, shall be able to endure those persecutions which shall come upon them because of their submission to His law, and as a test of their obedience.

Hugo de S.
Choro.
Euthymius.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. It is not poverty, whether voluntary or involuntary, merely that is here spoken of, but poverty of *spirit*.¹ Those are declared to be blessed who are poor not through the absence of worldly possessions, but in *spirit*, which is a virtue most difficult to attain and hard to preserve. By poverty of *spirit* is meant an absence of the spirit of pride,² humility and lowliness in their own sight, or, which is the same thing, that poverty which is the gift of the Spirit; hence he who is really humble is so by the operation of none other than of the Holy Spirit, and being filled with that Spirit, desires nothing before God, nothing except the Maker of the world Himself. This first Beatitude, then, speaks of two virtues, and in doing so warns us against two vices common to man, but destructive to the peace of his soul, and hateful in the sight of God:³—

Ferus.
Hilary.

Jerome.

Th. Aquinas.
Th. à Villa-
nova.

(1) We are called to humility of soul, as the corrective to that pride which is natural to the corrupt heart of man.

¹ Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι. —“The μακάριοι, which with such gracious emphasis stands first in these words of Christ, has not, down to ver. 11, either εἶσι or εἶσονται connected with it, although the translation gives it correctly enough for the obvious sense — *Blessed are!* In the sacred text it is a simple *proclamation* (like the Heb. בְּרָכָא), and contains as such the whole fulness of what mercy offers for the acceptance of faith, without any further definite announcement or qualification. It embraces *alike* the present and the future—they *are* now, immediately blessed, and they *shall be* so ever more and more unto perfection.” —*Stier*.

² “Pauperes spiritu, qui parum

habent de Spiritu Superbiæ.” — *Th. Aquinas*.

³ “Hanc beatitudinem primo omnium Christus voluit statuere, tanquam bonus et peritus artifex. Quia cum aliquis ædificium sumptuosum condere vult primo omnium fodit et terram foras ejicit postea vero lapides fundamenti ponit et ædificare incipit. Ita Christus ut divinum amorem et plurimas virtutes in nobis (si ita licet loqui) ædificet, prius à nobis mundanum amorem ejicit et rerum omnium terrenarum, suas ædificans in vera paupertate et contemptu divitiarum mundi: nam cum natura humana ita labefactata sit, vix hæc terrena possideri possunt, nisi cor nostrum illis fuerit nimis affectum et detentum.” — *Stella*.

(2) We are called to the contempt of worldly riches, which is the remedy for the lust of avarice. He who is poor in spirit may, indeed, possess the riches of earth, but he will not trust in them, will not love them, will not make them his treasure. Where riches are not only possessed, but loved, as they commonly are, there can be no real poverty of spirit, no true humility. But whatever danger there may be in them, their mere possession is perfectly consistent with even this virtue, true poverty of spirit. Beaux Amis.
Augustine.

Pride is that disease of the mind which especially hinders man from knowing himself; and without this self-knowledge, without the consciousness of our sinfulness, there can be no desire for deliverance from sin. Our Blessed Lord, who came that He might heal the infirmities of man's soul, and restore to it that soundness and blessedness which it had lost, therefore places humility before us as the very first step in the path of repentance.¹ For without this there can be no acknowledgment of our need, no confession of our sinfulness, no prayer for His help, no attaining to that blessedness which He here promises only to *the poor in spirit*. Sylvester.

And the reason for this blessedness is the promise made to *the poor in spirit*—the special blessedness which they have in part on earth, and which they shall receive in its completeness hereafter in *the kingdom of heaven*, a gift which involves all heavenly riches—the knowledge of the truth; the remission of sin; the gift of the Holy Ghost. Celestial glory in the world to come is *theirs* who have despised the glory and vanity of earth. It is not said *the poor in spirit* shall afterwards enter in and attain unto *the kingdom of heaven*, but that this kingdom is theirs already; it comes to them and enters into them. It is a gift already granted, a promise of that peace and happiness which begins now, but which shall last throughout eternity, and shall be perfected in the presence of God in glory.² And this blessedness which God gives to *the poor in spirit* is spoken of as *the kingdom of heaven*— Grotius.
Menochius.
Stier.
Estius.

(1) Because of the abundance of those good things which they derive from heaven.

¹ "Vis obtinere cælum quod perdidit superbiens angelus, qui confisus est in virtute sua et multitudine divitiarum suarum? Paupertatis vilitatem amplectere, et tuum erit." — *Bernard*. "Sicut superbia omnium malorum fons est, sic humilitas cunctarum origo virtutum." — *Ferus*.

² "Pauperes sunt qui utuntur hoc mundo tam quam non utantur [1 Cor. vii. 31]. Pauper est qui de mundo

nihil vult præter Illum qui fecit mundum, clamans cum propheta: *Quid mihi est in cælo, et a Te quid volui super terram* [Ps. lxxiii. 25]? Felix qui, videns turbas sæculi, videns mundum tam implicitum istis vanis sollicitudinibus, fugit et ascendit in montem, primum istum gradum voluntariæ paupertatis et veræ humilitatis tenens." — *Th. à Villanova, in festo om. Sanct. Concio prima, § 5.*

(2) Because of the honour with which *the poor in spirit* are regarded by the angels of God and by the Ever-Blessed Trinity; they are *kings* with God and Christ, as sharing in His kingship.

1 Pet. ii. 9.
Rev. v. 10.

(3) Because He who reigns there, and who gives these good things, is the only King—*King of kings and Lord of lords*.¹

Corn. & Lap.

Luca Brug.

The greatness of the glory at God's right hand and the abundance of all things are shown in this world—the *kingdom*; its stability, its unchanging character, its eternity, are indicated by the words—*of heaven*.

Rier.

He who came to give blessedness to man, by the removal of his sins, first *opened His mouth* with this declaration of blessedness to those who live a godly life.

Gregory
Nyss.

Blessedness is an attribute of God Himself; and the promise here made to the poor in spirit is this, that they shall partake of this attribute of God, and shall derive their blessedness from Him, who, as God, is the Blessed One. And this blessedness is twofold; and those to whom it is promised shall have it in a twofold manner—

(1) There is the blessedness of heaven, which *the poor in spirit* shall share when they come into the presence of God—the Blessed One.

Barradius.

(2) There is the blessedness which the faithful children of God receive on earth, and which, by God's appointment, is attached to those acts which Christ not only declares to be *blessed*, but which He makes blessed to His faithful disciples.² On earth, indeed, this blessedness is still imperfect, and is mingled with expectations; in heaven it is enjoyed in its fulness—it is essential and perfect blessedness. Here it is the blessedness of a sure hope rather than that of an unchanging possession, the blessedness of the way of holiness to that country in which is the full fruition.³ The blessedness which attends even the beginnings of virtue and peace hereafter will be consummated so that it shall be the same blessedness in eternal glory.

Corn. & Lap.

These words, however, are not only a declaration of blessedness; they stand before us as the object to be aimed at—as the end for which we are to strive. They are words of practical warning, pointing out to us the vices of pride

¹ "Nonne possidetis omnia si habetis Eum qui omnia habet? Cui Deus adest, nihil abest; et cui Christus sufficit nihil deficit."—*Pet. Blessensis*.

² "Beati sunt beatitudine hujus vitæ quia nihil desiderant. Possident regnum Dei, de quo Paulus. intra vos est, quia possident animam suam." —

Avancinus.

³ "He pronounces them *blessed* here whom He intends to pronounce so hereafter, when He shall say, *Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world* [Matt. xxv. 34]."—*John Norris*.

and avarice, which we are to shun. And let none think that there could be but little need of Christ's inculcating this virtue, or of warning His own disciples against this vice, since there could be but little fear that they, who were but poor fishermen, of little reputation and account amongst their fellows, would not be *poor in spirit*. Poverty as to outward means and worldly possession does not ensure poverty of spirit.¹ Whilst, however, we may well believe that these words were needed by them, yet the words were spoken not only for the disciples of Christ, but for the whole multitude who stood by; and not for those only, but for all mankind until the end of the world; for *no prophecy of God is of any private interpretation*: the calling is to all; the promises and the threatenings are for all.² But the warning was, without doubt, especially necessary for the disciples of Christ, and even for the twelve Apostles of the Lord. His frequent declaration of the highest spiritual truths, His presence amongst them, and His example, who was *meek and lowly of heart*, did not preserve them from strife and contention for pre-eminence in His kingdom. For, in truth, this fact, that they had been chosen by Him to be the preachers of the everlasting Gospel—that they were His messengers and ministers to the world—made them especially liable to the sin of pride; and the signs and miracles which were wrought through their instrumentality, so far from having a tendency to produce poverty of spirit, would naturally have a contrary effect. For them, therefore, and for the immediate disciples of our Blessed Lord, equally, at least, as for us, were these words spoken and the promise given—*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. 2 Pet. i. 20.

Matt. xi. 29.

Beaux Amis.

If for Christ's sake a man chooses to give up worldly wealth and to accept Christian poverty instead, he is here promised all celestial treasures. In this was Christ, who *for our sakes became poor*, an example to all His followers. When He was about to overcome Satan He gave up the riches and the glory of His Father's presence. He came to this earth and there tasted the bitterness of poverty, and died naked on the cross, and by doing so opened the gate of heaven, 2 Cor. viii. 9.

¹ "Non magnum est sua relinquere, sed laboriosum est seipsum relinquere: unde dicit *pauperes spiritu*."—*Ferus*.

² "Nihil eos vult Deus in terra possidere ut mentem et animum ad cœlestia elevent. Arbor enim dum plures rami inferiores illi abscinduntur tanto profundius in altum surgit, unde

ramis abscissis qui se in terram inclinant, ipsa arbor in altum surgit. Sic etiam Dominus terrena bona hominibus aufert ut cum Levitis fecit et Apostolis et id etiam modo facit cum viris Apostolicis et perfectis, quibus Dominus regnum cœleste, hæreditatem illis promissam paratam habet."—*Stella*.

and gave this unspeakable gift of blessedness to all who are poor in spirit.¹

Sylveira.

This word *spirit*, standing at the beginning of the Beatitudes, belongs to and is implied in them all. The promise is not merely to those who mourn, but to those who do so in spirit. Blessedness is not the lot of those who are meek merely, but of those who are meek in spirit. It must be understood in all the promises of blessing.

Salmeron.

Ps. cxxvi. 5.
Isa. lxi. 2, 3.
Luke vi. 21.
John xvi. 20.
2 Cor. i. 7.
Rev. xxi. 4.

(4) *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

Salmeron.

Corn. & Lap.
Th. & Villanova.

Bengel.

Chroustia.

Mourning is grief either for the loss of some desired good or on account of the presence of some hateful form of evil, expressed by outward tokens, such as tears. The mourning here referred to is not that caused by the loss of earthly goods or earthly friends, but grief for the loss of spiritual things, and for those sins which interpose between man and God.² But a mourning is here referred to which is more even than sorrow for man's personal sin; it seems to imply rather a sorrow and mourning on account of the sins of others, grief at the sight of a world lying in wickedness. It is a mourning first, indeed, over his own sins, and then, and as a consequence of the forgiveness which he has received, a mourning over the sins of those around him.³

They shall be comforted—shall receive the consolation which is in itself a blessing. This is a twofold promise of comfort:—

(1) Here, by the consolation which is inseparable from the presence of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, whose work on man's heart is the forgiveness of the sins of all those who repent.

¹ "Nudus ascendit meus Jesus ad crucem. Milites ergo, cum crucifixissent Eum acceperunt vestimenta Ejus [Joan. xix. 23]. Et quare omnium Dominus hanc mortem eligit, qua nudus occumbat? Cur non vestitus Suam sanctissimam animam exhalat? Pulehrè D. Athanasius Orat. de Passione. 'Quum enim,' ait, 'exueretur Dominus, eo ipso invisibiliter erigebatur de diabolo trophæum.' Et postea subdit. 'Morte Sua suos sublevabat Dominus in cælum.' Erat Dominus in cruce exspoliatus diaboli principatum, et suis membris, hoc est suis electis, aperiens portas regni cælorum. In extrema nuditate crucifixus pendet, nam ipse

paupertate ac nuditate maximè requiritur ac trahitur regnum cælorum.—Sylveira.

² "Lugentes non dicuntur orbita aut contumelias, aut damna mereri, sed peccata vetera flentes, hoc est, qui poenas sed qui culpas lugent aut lugentes, de quibus hinc Christus.—Hilarius ap. Labatam.

³ "Aqua hæc lachrymarum Paradisi irrigat; Ecclesiam, ut sit maculâ, lavat: aut facit aut in Paradisum. Cum enim profus lachrymarum tota irrigatur conscientia, aquæ producuntur, fructum facientes."—Pet. Cellensis.

(2) In heaven, by the vision of glory and the conscious presence of the Almighty. The words, however, primarily seem to refer to those consolations which are given in this world, the changing of mourning into joy by the removal of the cause of mourning; the comforting sense of sins forgiven which commences in this life,¹ and which, like all of God's gifts, shall be perfected in the life to come. But let us note, it is not said that they who mourn for sin shall be pardoned, but *shall be comforted*. God's mercies are always greater than man's sorrows. Comfort is not only a more encouraging word than pardon; it follows upon pardon, and implies forgiveness; for the comfort of mourners consists in the ceasing of the cause of mourning. Those, then, who mourn over their sins have here the promise that they shall be consoled, *shall be comforted*, when they have obtained the full forgiveness of their offences.

Sylveira.

Salmeron.

Augustine.
Euthymius.

Chrysostom.

Pseudo-
Chrysostom.

If they who *mourn* over their sins and the sins of others² are *blessed*, how much more blessed are those who mourn because of their absence from God, and who weep because their sins have put them far off from Him, and desire Him *as the hart desireth the water brooks*.

Paulus de
Palacio.
Ps. xlii. 1.

(5) *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*³

Ps. xxxvii.
9, 11;
cxlix. 4.
Isa. lvii. 13.
Rom. iv. 13.

The meek—that is, those who patiently endure evils and injuries; who murmur not when God afflicts them or punishes them for their sins; who are humble and gentle in imitation of their Divine Master, and are passive under the hand of God, having wholly surrendered their will to Him, content to know when adversity befalls them that He wills it so. They who are so content are *meek*, and obtain the blessedness.⁴ Such men are not under the dominion of anger, and are free from hatred against their fellows, do violence to

Chromatius.

Tirinus.

Menochius.

Stier.

Th. Aquinas.

¹ "*Ipsi consolabuntur*—qui propria peccata lugent (Ambros. lib. v. in Luc.). Ablue igitur te lachrymis tuis, lava fletibus: si tu ipse te fleveris, alius te non flebit. Nam si Saul deflisset peccata sua, alius eum non flevisset [1 Sam. xv. 35]."—*Beaux Amis*.

² "*Lachrymæ ob aliena peccata sanctissimæ sunt*."—*Ph. Diez*.

³ "*Hæc est secunda beatitudo in Vulgata Latina, quem sequuntur S. Hieronymus, Augustinus, ceterique Latini. In Græcis verò codicibus, quos sequuntur Syrus, Arabicus, S.*

Chrysostomus, Theophylactus, Euthymius, ceterique Græci, hæc est tertia beatitudo; secunda enim in iis est *Beati qui lugent*."—*Corn. à Lapide*. Most of the Latin commentators follow the arrangement of the Vulgate. Chromatius and Salmeron, however, adhere to the order observed in the Greek MSS. and Fathers; and the latter adds, "*Ratio illam lectionem videtur confirmare*."

⁴ "*Illi proprie irascuntur qui non contenti divina ordinatione*"—*Th. Aquinas*.

none, are ready to forgive when injured, and prefer to lose what is theirs by right rather than to contend, and live in perpetual strife: these grow into calmness, and are saved from those suspicions and that distrust which disturb the whole soul of those who give way to anger; and, being free from this passion, are saved from strife, contention, and every evil work which springs from anger and hatred.¹ The promise refers not to those who are never provoked to anger, but those who, when provoked, restrain themselves, and overcome this temptation, after, it may be, much struggling against it.

None can be *meek* who are not *poor in spirit*. There can be no tranquil sea until the boisterous winds have been lulled to sleep. The fire cannot be extinguished so long as fuel be heaped upon it, and, whilst thorns and briars remain to be consumed, the fire will rage amongst them. So neither can there be a quiet mind, a soul free from the turmoil of anger and rage, until passion and pride be removed from it, and meekness takes possession of the soul.²

The meek, then, are *blessed*—

(1) Because, in opposition to the practice of the world and its corrupting maxims, in obedience to the law of God and the will of His Son, they have laid aside all malice and hatred and revenge.

(2) Because they are thereby free from the goadings and torment of anger, which will not allow the heart which is possessed by it to find any rest.

(3) Because, being free from anger, they are free also from its evil fruits—malice, hatred, strife, contentions, and quarrels amongst brethren.³

(4) Because they resemble the God of mercy, and are fashioned after the likeness of their Incarnate Lord, who was *meek and lowly of heart*, and also calls upon us to learn of Him this virtue of meekness.

Matt. xi. 29.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

(5) Because, being free from anger, they are enabled to

¹ “*Πραεῖς* is found in the Old Testament answering to the עָנָו of the Psalms and Prophets; and in the New Testament *πρᾶος*, *πραῦς*, *πραότης*, indicates mostly (as besides in the Greek *πραῦθυμος*, *πραῦνοος*) an inner quality of mind. Observe carefully these passages: 1 Cor. iv. 21; Gal. vi. 1; 1 Pet. iii. 4; and especially Eph. iv. 2. Thus *πραεῖς* means a willingness and plasticity of spirit, in opposition to the proud, opposing obstinacy of the natural self-will of man.”—*Stier*.

² “*Hujus virtutis pretiosissimo sale omnes præclaræ actiones condiuntur*”—*Polyanthus*.

³ “*Πραότης* is to be viewed as the first fruit of the *πενθεῖν*. A sense of our own guilt—complete repentance—renders us gentle in judging of others. He who has actually received forgiveness carries a forgiving principle within. Thereby not only is the kingdom of God in him, but he also will be in the kingdom of God.”—*Olshausen*.

see and understand the truths of God, and to comprehend His ways, which are perfect peace. For *the meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.*

Salmeron.
Ps. xxv. 9.

The meek shall inherit the earth. All commentators agree that by the words *the earth* is not meant this material world, at least as it exists at present. The promises made by our Blessed Lord are all spiritual, and this, like the rest, applies to that reward which the meek in spirit will receive. By *the earth*, then, is meant—

Ps. xxxvii.
11.

(1) The *land of the living*, of which the Psalmist speaks: *I cried unto Thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living*; the new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness; the kingdom of peace which shall be set up after the judgment of the earth, and of which the seat will probably be *the earth* in which we now live: for how little soever the children of God may possess of this earth now, after the resurrection at the last day they will have rule in that place which has for a time despised them, that *land* which is promised to those who govern themselves by submitting to the rule of their parents.

Bernard.
Menochius.

Ps. cxlii.

2 Pet. iii. 13.

Vide Com-
ment.
Sixth Sund.
aft. Epiph.
Barradius.

(2) The possession and rule over themselves who are of *the earth*,¹ the control of that earthly body and habitation of the soul which is made of the dust of *the earth*. It is the blessed reward of meekness in this life, that it gives a man rule over his own body and insures the subjection of his own heart and will to the rule of the Spirit,² so that he may rule over and possess himself in place of being possessed by the Evil One and of being the slave of evil lusts. This, indeed, is a greater privilege than to rule over any portion of this earth's surface. He who is not master over himself, who cannot restrain the motion of anger nor that of lust, has no power over himself, does not rule that tabernacle of earth which he bears about with him, and cannot, therefore, hereafter *inherit the earth* and rule *in the land of the living*.³

Jerome.
Bernard.
Hilary.

Cassian.

Th. à Villa-
nova.

¹ "Hanc ego *terram* corpus nostrum intelligo. Quòd si possidere vult anima, si regnare desiderat super membra sua, necesse est ut sit ipsa mitis et superiori suo subjecta, quoniam tale inveniet inferius suum, qualem se exhibuerit superiori. Armatur enim creatura ad ulciscendam sui injuriam Creatoris. Et ideo noverit anima quæ rebellem sibi invenit carnem suam, se quoque minùs, quam oporteat, superioribus potestatibus esse subjectam." — Bernard, in Fest. Omnium Sanct. Serm. i. § 9.

² "Terra promissa mitibus caro sanctorum est, quæ felici resurrectione mutabitur et immortalitatis gloriâ vestiatur." — S. Leo, Serm. de Omnib. Sanct.

³ "Quàm olim *terram viventium*: nunc autem *terram sui cordis*. Hanc non possident iracundi, quia æstu quasi extra se rapiuntur; at qui acquiescit in *crepationibus*, possessor est cordis [Prov. xv. 32]. Id est, qui non irascitur, non commovetur. Quanta hæc est felicitas, hac interna pace et tranquillitate frui!" — Avancinus.

(3) *They shall inherit the earth*, so that whatever they have given to them in this life they may possess instead of being enslaved to it by their love for earthly riches. Whoever lusts after the things of this world, and has his treasure upon the earth, is a slave to the earth, and not its inheritor.¹

Ph. Diez.

Cajetan.

Rom. viii. 17.

Shall inherit (κληρονομήσουσιν) *the earth*—that is, shall inherit it by hereditary succession, as members of the family of heaven, as *heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ*.² Participation in this kingdom is connected with meekness, because the kingdom of God, being a fellowship of brotherly love and union, is opposed to the disunion prevailing in the world through the selfish motives and maxims of the sinful heart.

Olshausen.

Ferus.

James I. 19.

The world esteems those most highly who are quick and ready in their own defence, who vindicate themselves boldly and successfully. Christ's promise, however, to *the meek* tells us that they are really *blessed* who are ready to forgive injuries, who do not attempt self-vindication, and are *slow* at all times to *wrath*. Self-renunciation is the way to dominion over the world without and the world within. He who gives himself wholly to obey Divine grace, will receive here the forgiveness of all his sins, the healing of all his infirmities, and above all will obtain full rule and control over his own heart;³ and will receive in reward a crown of glory in the eternal kingdom.

Ph. Diez.
Stier.

Ps. xvii. 15;
xlii. 2;
lxiii. 1.
Isa. lv. 1;
lxv. 13.
Luke vi. 21.
John iv. 14;
vi. 35; vii.
37, 38.
Chrysostom.

Emin. ab
Incarnat.

(6) *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

The other Beatitudes are concerned with actions: the endurance of evil, the virtue which comes from the exercise of the grace given. Here our Lord promises blessedness to all those who desire, who *hunger and thirst after righteousness*, who make the doing God's will the desire of their heart, their very meat and drink, that which shall strengthen them the more perfectly to do His will. In this did Christ set

¹ "Ipsi possidebunt terram. His enim terrena bona sicut avaris non dominantur: sed tanquam domini illa possident."—Ph. Diez.

² "Κληρονομήσουσι, κληρονομήσουσι nirtoun—id est, 'hereditate possidebunt'—quo modo B. Augustinus legit: plus autem id est, hereditate sive hereditario

jure possidere, quam possidere dumtaxat. Significatur stabilis æternaque possessio, qua pellendi orbis atque nunquam sint."—Luca Brugensis.

³ "Mansuetudo magistra gaudii, imitatrix Christi, cœlitum proprietas, vinculum et nodus dæmonum, acuta adversum amaritudinem seu animi acerbitem."—Clemens, Gradu xxix.

them an example, since it was His *meat to do the will of Him that sent Him*.¹ John iv. 34.

Righteousness is sometimes used in Holy Scripture to mean—

(1) Justice—uprightness in our dealings with our fellow-men.

(2) The whole circle of Christian virtues—as when we read of Zacharias and Elisabeth, that *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless*; or again, as in this same sermon of our Blessed Lord on the Mount, *Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Corn. & Lap. Luke i. 6. Whithy. Matt. v. 20.

Connected as this word *righteousness* is with mercy in the next Beatitude, it is evident that it is applied here to the conduct of man to his fellow-men, the duty which man owes to his neighbour.² It is placed after humility sorrow for sin, and meekness, inasmuch as the desire for justice towards others presupposes that those who *hunger and thirst after righteousness* are themselves doing that which is right: for in vain shall we seek that in others which we are not first careful to maintain in ourselves. Salmeron.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst, not after God, nor the joys at God's right hand, not after the knowledge of God; for all these may be sought for because of the comfort and pleasure which they give, and intellectual knowledge may be even the cause of pride and falling in the child of God. The blessedness which is promised is to those who *hunger and thirst* after obedience to God, and conformity to His likeness, to those who desire that they may be righteous as He is righteous.³ Paulus de Palatio.

¹ "Cibus Christi erat, *facere voluntatem Patris*, id est, convertere et salvare animas. 'Manducare volebat Christus,' inquit August., 'quando poma quærebat in arbore et si inveniret, manducaret. Bibere volebat Christus quando dixit *Da mihi bibere*. Dixit in cruce, *Sitio*: Quid esurivit, quid sitivit Christus? nisi bona opera nostra. In persequentibus et crucifigentibus, quia nulla bona opera invenerat, jejunebat. Hinc conqueritur. *Humiliabam in jejuniis animam meam*' (Ps. xxx. 13).'"—*Adr. Mangotius*. "Cibus ejus patientia mea, cibus ejus salus mea. Sed cum pascitur, pascit: gaudens de nostro spirituali profectu, et hoc suo gaudio spirituali

reficiens."—*S. Bernard, Serm. 71 in Cant.*

² "Dicit qui esuriunt justitiam: non dicit prudentiam, vel temperantiam, vel fortitudinem, sed justitiam, quæ est virtus generalis ad omnes. Unde hic accipitur, secundum quod homo ab ea generaliter justus dicitur, per exercitia virtutum, et hæc est justitia, quæ tribuit unicuique quod suum est, Deo et proximo et cætera. Deo tria scilicet, honorem Creatori, amorem Redemptori, timorem Judici: proximo tria, obedientiam superiori, concordiam pari, beneficentiam inferiori: sibi tria, munditiam cordi, custodiam ori, disciplinam carni."—*Gerranus*.

³ "Justitia non affectu aestimanda

Our Blessed Lord does not say they are *blessed* who are righteous, but that *they shall be filled* or *blessed* who hunger and thirst after it, who fervently desire it; for though we cannot always insure that right shall be done to others, yet we can always desire it. And the promise, though a spiritual one, is of a reward especially in this life, at least in its beginning, and up to the measure of man's capacity to receive. For, unlike those who hunger and thirst after the riches, possessions, and pleasures of this world, and find that they never receive what will satisfy their longings, Christ promises satisfaction to those who make righteousness their first and chief desire: *they shall be filled*. They shall receive in perfection that which they have desired—the beginnings in this life, the fulness in that which is to come;¹ and as they have ardently longed for this virtue—for this is implied in the words *hunger and thirst*—so shall they receive in perfection from the hand of God, and shall be *filled* by Him, receiving thus more than they have desired; for such is the bounty of a rewarding God, that His gifts are far greater than even the desire of His saints.

This Beatitude is especially opposed to that woe which our Blessed Lord denounces against those who are full, and who have received their consolation in this life—those whom the world esteems alone to be blessed. And He who created this *hunger and thirst* in the soul of man, by creating it declares to us that its appropriate food—that which can satisfy it—is also provided, and shall be given to us.² This, however, though promised to all those who *hunger and thirst after righteousness* on earth, is not an earthly consolation, for such cannot fill and satisfy the heart of man; it is a heavenly and spiritual blessing which is given—God Himself, who alone can satisfy the longings of the regenerate soul, according to the promise of our Blessed Lord—*He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst*.

He, then, hungers after righteousness who desires to walk according to the righteousness of God: he thirsts after

est sed effectu et consensu." — *Pet. Blessensis*.

¹ "Esurire est profectum in omni virtute exoptare, Dei honorem et proximorum perfectionem desiderare, quatenus procedit ex charitate et zelo justitiæ. Isti enim saturabuntur in cælo. Observa autem quod non dixit de præsentibus saturantur, sed de futuro loquutus est, nam in hac vita misera nihil est quod iusti palato possit satisfacere.

Terrena enim hæc animam nostram non complent, nam qui biberit ex hac aqua sitiet iterum [Joan. iv. 13]. Omnia quæ presens vita continet velut salsamentum sunt, quod non ad saturitatem apponitur, sed ad tantum gustum excitet." — *Stella*.

² "Dei dona sunt merita nostra, Suaque Deus munera coronat dum merita nostra coronat." — *Augustinus, Lib. de Corrept. et Grat. c. 13*.

righteousness who desires to obtain the knowledge of it. In a word, they both hunger and thirst after righteousness who hunger and thirst for union with Christ, who is *the Lord* their *righteousness*.

Pseudo-Chrysostom.
Corn. à Lap.
Jer. xxiii. 6.

(7) *Blessed are the merciful :¹ for they shall obtain mercy.*

Ps. xli. 1.
Prov. xiv. 21 ;
xix. 17.
Ecclus.
xxviii. 2.
Matt. vi. 14.
Mark xi. 25.
2 Tim. i. 16.
Heb. vi. 10.
James ii. 13.

In the preceding Beatitude the promise was made to those who greatly desire righteousness or justice. But since justice and mercy are so blended in the perfection of Christian charity that they ought never to be divided, our Blessed Lord, immediately after He had declared that they who follow after and desire justice shall be satisfied, now promises a like reward to the merciful. Justice without mercy is cruelty, and mercy without justice imprudence and profusion.² Our Blessed Lord shows us how these evils are to be avoided by uniting both these virtues

Aquinas.
Gloss. Ordin.

it is not almsgiving which is here enjoined upon us, nor any other single act of love to others : it is a merciful heart, which is ever overflowing in acts of mercy, and especially a forgiving temper ; for, as elsewhere throughout these Beatitudes, it is the spirit which is spoken of. God pronounces those to be *blessed* whose heart is *merciful*, and who aid others in their need by works of mercy, whether temporal or spiritual.

Arboreus.
Salmeron.

Threefold is the mercy which God seeks from each of us—

(1) Mercy to ourselves, by sorrow and earnest repentance for sin.

(2) Mercy towards our brethren—mankind at large—and that we have compassion upon them after the example given to us by the Good Samaritan.

(3) Mercy towards those who are placed under our control, such as a father shows to his children in the forgiveness of their offences.³

And in return for our mercy towards ourselves and others,

¹ "The term ἐλεήμονες differs from πρᾶεῖς in verse 5 in this, that while the latter bear their brother's *guilt* with love, the former kindly assist him in his *distresses*. So far as distresses and guilt are connected, the two terms are quite identical."—*Olshausen*.

² "Justitiæ lumen est misericordia."—*Glossa*.

³ "Est hominis triplex misericordia, propria, fraterna, paterna. Propria est hominis ad seipsum, per contri-

tionem. Fraterna est fratris ad proximum, per compassionem. Paterna est patris ad filium, per correctionem. Item misericordia prælati in subditos triplex est, in compassione cordis, in consolatione verbi, adjuvando in opere. Item misericordia Dei triplex est : prima in justificatione peccatoris, quæ à culpa liberat ; secunda in tribulatione, liberans à pœna ; tertia erit in resurrectione, liberans ab omni miseria."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

threefold is the mercy which our Father in heaven manifests to us; *for with what measure we mete, it shall be measured to us again.* He will give us—

Matt. vii. 2.

(1) Mercy upon our repentance, the forgiveness of our sins.

(2) Mercy in the time of sorrow and affliction, when our Heavenly Samaritan binds up our wounds.

Hugo de S.
Chiaro.

(3) Mercy in the resurrection of the soul from sin, which is more than forgiveness—which is the presence of the Holy Spirit, our sanctification.

Corn. & Lap.

Acts xx. 35.

The world reckons those to be especially blessed who receive much and who part with little. In the ethics of Christ's kingdom, on the contrary, they are declared to be more blessed who give than those who receive. Here we are told in what the greater blessedness consists—that they who show human mercy shall receive Divine compassion. Thankfully, O Lord, would we receive this Thy promise, that for our small and imperfect deeds of kindness we shall obtain Thy boundless mercy! Thankfully, O Lord, do we forgive those who trespass against us in small things, that so we may obtain Thy forgiveness for our great offences! Thankfully do we give alms of the things which Thou hast entrusted to our keeping, the transitory wealth of earth, that so we may by Thy bounty obtain the imperishable riches of heaven! Great is Thy mercy towards man in thus placing within his power that mercy by which he may obtain mercy from Thee!¹

Th. & Villa-
nova.

They shall obtain mercy.

(1) To the merciful, to those sinners who are really compassionate and bountiful to their fellows, God inspires the desire for repentance, illuminates them by His grace, and converts them from their evil ways, so that their sins are forgiven.

(2) He gives to those who are merciful continual supplies of grace, by which they grow in grace and increase in His love and favour.

(3) He gives eternal life to those who abide in His love, the highest gifts of His grace.

¹ “Das pauperi nummum et accipis Deum, juxta illud: Da nummum et accipe regnum; da micam et accipe massam; da pretium et accipe præmium; da donum et accipe Deum.”—*Corn. & Lapide.* “Condonasti proximo tuo delictum aliquod leviusculum; tibi Deus condonabit omnia peccata. Re-

misisti fratri vindictam temporariam; tibi Deus remittet poenam æternam. Sublevasti tua pecunia fratris inopiam; tibi reddet Deus opes Suas cœlestes. Agnosce dignitatem Christianæ sapientiæ, et ad qualium disciplinarum artes atque præmia voceris intellige.”—*Königsteyn.*

(4) In this life God returns in temporal blessings that mercy which men show to their fellow-men.¹ Sylveira.

As in all other spiritual duties, let us remember with reference to this—

(1) That we must be *merciful* not only to others, but, in order that we may be thus merciful to our brethren, we must be also *merciful* to ourselves, recognising the extent and the cause of our misery, acknowledging both our general sinfulness and our sins and departure from God, who is our real good.

(2) We must, because of that mercy which we have obtained, that mercy which we need, show mercy to others, not only in their spiritual needs, but also in the times of bodily want, since man has received from the hand of his Maker not only a living soul, but also a body. Salmeron.

(8) *Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.* Ps. xv. 2 ;
xxiv. 4.
Heb. xii. 14.
1 John iii. 2,
3.

As the eye, when it is covered with a film, is unable to see any external object, so a heart foul and sordid by sin cannot see God.² Ferus.

The word *heart* is used in Holy Scripture for—

(1) The spirit, the natural inclination of man, as—*Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witness, blasphemies.* Prov. iv. 23.
Mat. xv. 19.

(2) The intellect or memory of man, as—*Perceive ye not yet, neither understand ? have ye your heart yet hardened ?* Mark viii. 17

(3) The will of man, as in these passages : *Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. The whole heart, the soul of man, the intellect, and the will of man all are required to be pure if he would see God.*³ Ps. xxxi. 24.
Deut. vi. 5.
Salmeron.

Blessed are the pure in heart—

¹ “ Misericordiam Deus misericordiâ remunerat. Sed parvæ misericordiæ magnam misericordiam rependit. Solet enim pro rebus parvis donare dona maxima.”—*Barradius*.

² “ Nisi oculus mundus et sanus fuerit, nihil videbit. Quod autem squama aut pulvis injectus est oculis, hoc immunditia et peccata sunt animo. Mundum igitur cor est quod alienum est, nedum ab opere malo, sed et ab

affectu, in quo nihil pulveris residet mundanarum cupiditatum, quod alienum est ab amore sui, quod à solo Deo pendet : hoc oculo videtur Deus. Speculum si mundum est, recipit in se imagines sic et anima.”—*Ferus*.

³ “ Purity opposed—(1) to carnality ; (2) to hypocrisy [Heb. xii. 14]. Holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord [1 John ii. 2, 3]. We shall see Him as He is.”—*Keble*.

Haymo. (1) Those who are free from all hatred and malice against their brethren.

Chrysostom. (2) Those who are free from the dominion of lust, whose heart is chaste and pure; not blessed are they who are pure and clear of intellect as philosophers, but those who are pure in their heart and affections, which is within the reach of all men.

Jerome. (3) Blessed are they whose conscience is free from all sin, who are not pursuing iniquity nor desiring that which is evil.¹

Corn & Lap. (4) Blessed are they whose heart is free from the love of earthly things, whose affections are centred on God.

Maldonatus. (5) Blessed are they who are pure, sincere, truthful in their heart—in whom is no deceit nor falsehood.

John xv. 1—5. He sees God, and his heart is pure, who really believes in Christ, who knows Him to be a Saviour from sin, and who follows His commands.² Such a man sees in God his Father, inasmuch as He is the Father of Christ, into whom he is incorporated, as a branch into the trunk of the living vine. Such a man knows that the Father loves him not only as His own creation, His own child, but also as a member of the only-begotten Son. In doing the will of God he attains to the knowledge and the sight of God. He knows the doctrines of God, and sees the infinite love of Him who is love. The gift is not bestowed on him who is merely externally and by profession the servant of God. It is not the privilege of those whose religion is that of mere outward orthodoxy. It is the heart of man which must be pure and clean from sin before he can see God.³ And in this vision of God, imperfect here, but hereafter to be made perfect, shall consist man's blessedness: this is the prize and reward which the Almighty Father in heaven gives to all those who are pure in heart.

John vii. 17.
Guillaud.

Salmeron.

Isa. lii. 11.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

The heart of the child of God should be pure as a clean vessel, as a polished mirror, as the eye which suffers if but the least dust is in it: pure as a clean vessel, since we bear the vessels of God; pure as a polished mirror, that we may reflect back the image of God in all our actions;⁴ pure as an eye which is blinded by no dust of earth.

¹ "Quos non arguit conscientia ullius peccati. Mundus [Deus] mundo corde conspicitur: templum Dei non potest esse pollutum."—*Jerome*.

² "Videbunt Eum contemplatione et cognitione sublimium veritatum et vivendo amabunt et amando inhærebunt."—*Avancinum*.

³ "Amor vitiorum hoc efficit; ut

nolit homo intelligere quomodo bene agat; atque isto vitio, lex Dei deleta est de cordibus, non solum ut non ametur sed ut nec sciatur: sicut dicit sapiens *Excæcavit malitia eorum*."—*Adr. Mangotius*.

⁴ "Mundatur speculum abstersione, defricatione, ablutione. Abstersione est puritas confessionis et orationis. Defri-

They shall see God. As in the other Beatitudes, so here also there is a blessing promised in this life, which is but the commencement and pledge of that blessedness which shall be the possession of God's saints in the world to come. The vision which shall be granted us in the life to come is far greater and different in kind from that which shall be given us in this present world.¹ The imperfect sight of God which is granted to *the pure in heart* even in this life, is but the beginning and the pledge of the more perfect manifestation of the presence of God in the life to come. For though all purity of heart, in whatsoever degree it may be possessed, is necessarily accompanied by an inward sight of God, since nothing but the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart can produce purity, yet this is not to be compared with the full and perfect vision of the Divine glory which *they shall* hereafter see who are pure in heart. In this world *no man hath seen God at any time*, nor can they see Him, because of the imperfection of their present faculties; for *He dwelleth in the light, which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see*. So that now He cannot be seen in His essential glory, but only by His works. In this way it is that St. John declares of the Apostles that they had already seen Him—not the unapproachable glory of the Father, but the flesh of the Incarnate One and the outward works and manifestations which make known the presence of God. By this presence God may be seen and known in the heart of man, now satisfying its longings after righteousness, purifying it from evil affections, and rendering mercy in return for the mercy shown to man. But no man hath seen nor can see God in this present life—

Olshausen.

John i. 18.

1 Tim. vi. 16.

1) By intellectual vision, which shall comprehend the whole of God—His purposes, His wisdom, the extent of His love, His works.

(2) With the eyes of the body.

What man has already seen are but partial glimpses of God; the wisdom of the Creator as evidenced in His works

catio est disciplinæ austeritas. Ablutio lachrymarum et eleemosynarum largitas."—*Hugo de S. Charo.*

¹ "Cordi nostro Se offert Deus et aliquid Sui luminis infundit, invitans et provocans. Nisi enim aliquo modo sentiretur, nec appetendi nec inquirendi spes esset ulla aliqua, vel facultas; sed quia ex Patre sentitur, admirationis est odor ille et sapor, nullam cum carnalibus dulcedinibus habens similitudinem

et per omnia suavitate differens: eoque desideratur copiosius, quo cætera delectamenta excidit. Desiderium autem inquirentes purificat, et purificatio, exclusis enormitatibus, ad formam Dei provehit, ascendens atque in opere suo imago et similitudo Dei multis laboriosisque progressionibus et incrementis, propriam sibi demum indicat dignitatem." — *Cyprian ad Cornelium Papam.*

Beaux Amis.

Salmeron.

Acts xv. 9.

Heb. xi. 1.

Augustine.

Salmeron.

Th. à Villa-
nova.Rom. xvi. 20.
1 Cor. xiv. 33.
2 Cor. xiii. 11.
1 Thess. v.
23.
2 Thess. iii.
16.James iii. 17,
18.

—the manifestation of Godhead in the Person of the Word Incarnate — the visible effects and workings of the Holy Spirit. These are the pleasures and the foreshadowings of that perfect vision of God which is reserved for His children in the next world.¹ For the pure in heart shall yet see more than they can attain to in this world. For faith by which the heart is purified is the believing that which we see not; *the evidence of things not seen*; and the reward of faith is to see that of which without seeing we have yet believed. *They shall see.* As with reference to the other Beatitudes, so of this, what is promised to man is promised to the whole nature of man, body and soul. When we wake up from the sleep of death we shall see Him with our eyes, and shall be *satisfied* with His likeness. The heathen and Platonic philosophers could speak of a vision and a blessedness of which the soul was to partake; but Christianity promises these blessings not to a portion of our being only, but to the whole redeemed nature of man; for the vision of God the Father, and the sight of the Eternal Son, will be the enjoyment of the souls of God's saints when again united to their bodies.

In vain shall we strive to see and know God so long as our eye is blinded by lust and worldly vanity.² Let us purge our eyes from sin; let us turn our hearts aside from lustful desires; let us withdraw our minds from the pursuit of the riches and pleasures of earth, and then shall we see God.

(9) *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*³

This Beatitude naturally follows after that promised to the pure in heart, for the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, and the blessedness which is the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. When we have endeavoured, by God's blessing, to attain to purity of heart and conscience, and when all leaven of malice and wickedness has been purged out of our hearts, then will it

¹ "Triplex est genus mundi cordis: prius est carere mortali crimine; alterum carere his peccatis et eorum occasionibus; tertium, idque ut summum, ita et difficillimum, negasse voluntatem in omnibus; est enim voluntas propria fons immunditiarum. Ab hoc fugisse fonte plena munditia est. Jam, ut quisque cor magis mundaverit, Deum clarius videbit."—*Paulus de Palacio.*

² "Munditia cordis et conscientie

puritas nullam nubem ad intuendum Dominum patietur."—*Chromatius.*

³ "Septima, *Beati pacifici.* Et bene septima, quoniam eo die ab omnibus mundi operibus requievit Deus."—*Beaux Amis.*

"Septimo loco ponitur beatitudo pacis, quia in Sabbato, septimo ætatis plenarie dabitur pax habentibus beatitudines supradictas."—*Gorranus.*

be our duty to labour to make others partakers of the same purity which we have obtained; and this cannot be so long as there is enmity in their hearts towards their Maker, nor so long as there are strife and contention among themselves. Mayer.

Blessed are the peacemakers (εἰρηνοποιοί). Not the peaceful soul merely, for this is the same as *the meek*; the promise is given to the active makers of peace. They who first make peace within their own hearts, by putting away those sins which create enmity and strife in their own bosoms, and then labour to reconcile those who are at variance; for it is of no avail to make peace between others so long as our own heart is the seat of rebellious and contentious vices.¹ And let those who would be *peacemakers* remember that it is not enough for them to strive to reconcile others who are at enmity; they must be forgiving to their own enemies, and must be reconciled to those who are at variance with themselves,² and then will they be able to labour with some hope of success in uniting those who are at strife with others. Hugo de S. Claro.
Augustine.
Jerome.
Pseudo-Chrysostom.
Titelmann.

The world is accustomed to consider those to be *blessed* who vanquish their enemies, who are able to overcome and triumph over their foes; but God pronounces them to be *blessed* who make peace with those who have offended them, and who shrink from strife, contention, and war.³ Here our Blessed Lord says that the *peacemakers* are blessed, that is—

(1) Those who have made peace with God by putting off the deeds of Satan.

(2) Those who, as a consequence of this peace with God, have assuaged that contention which is ever raging between the body and the soul of the sinner, and have controlled the lust of the flesh and stilled the reproaches of conscience. Augustine.

(3) Those who earnestly desire for fellowship one with

¹ "Est pax quæ nec est meritum nec præmium: pax quam Dominus odit: pax scilicet terrenæ voluptatis: de qua Dominus dicit, *non veni pacem mittere in terram sed gladium* [Matt. x. 34]. Pax enim quæ in deliciis carnis exercetur, pessima est: Teste propheta qui dicit: *Zelavi super iniquos, pacem peccatorum videns* [Ps. lxxii. 3]. *Pax pax et non est pax* [Ezek. xiii. 10]."—Pet. Blessensis.

² "Εἰρηνοποιός is very distinct from εἰρηνεύων. The latter signifies one who *maintains* peace already existing; the former one who *makes* it when it is

wanting. Hence in the εἰρηνοποιός a relative purity is supposed, because the element of strife, sin, must be banished from the heart, and that of peace must be active there, if his labours are to have any effect."—Olehaussen.

³ "The words very well become the mouth of Him that spake them, who was Himself the greatest *peacemaker* in the world. He made peace in heaven by the blood of His cross, and endeavoured to promote it on earth. He first reconciled God to man, and then tried to reconcile men to one another."—John Norris.

another, and strive to maintain peace between themselves and their brethren.

(4) Those who actively exert themselves in reconciling those who are at enmity, and in bringing about peace between their neighbours who are at variance, and who are separated through this variance: and therefore—

(5) Those who labour to restore the unity of the Church, and to bring in those who are separated from it.

God is our common Parent, the Father of us all; and in no other way can we maintain our place in His family and enter into His kingdom of glory, than by living in brotherly love with each other upon earth.

They shall be called the sons of God. They shall not only be the sons of God, the sons of Him who is man's peace, and who has made, by His death upon the cross, those to be one who before were at enmity, but their efforts for peace shall be recognised, *they shall be called* and acknowledged even by men whilst they are on earth to be the *children* of the Giver of all peace, the God of love.¹ The sonship of the regenerate children of God implies their likeness to Him, and this sonship will be evident now to the world itself, who, because the children of God are peacemakers, will know them to be His sons; and the likeness which in this respect they bear to their Father in this life will be perfected in the eternal kingdom.² For as we have borne the image of the earthy in this world, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly in the life to come.

They shall be called the sons of God—

(1) Because of their likeness to God, who is love, and a lover of peace, and who sent His only-begotten Son into this world to destroy the works of the devil, in order that He might reconcile man to God, and might also make peace between man and his fellow-man.

(2) Because they share in the office and bear the name of

“Notat Cajetanus noster, Christum non dixisse quod filii Dei erunt, sed quod vocabuntur; et ait: *ex eo quod non solum erunt, sed vocabuntur, significatur, quod cognoscentur et nominabuntur ab aliis filii Dei; quod plus est quam esse filios Dei.* Magnum est aliquā frui perfectione et excellentia; sed illud ab aliis cognosci et promulgari hoc maximum est.”—*Immun. ab Incarnat.*

² “Per fidem recole Deum Creatorem, adoro Redemptorem, expecto Salvatorem; credo videre in omnibus creaturis, habere in meipso et quod his

omnibus ineffabiliter jucundius atque beatius est, cognoscere in Seipso. Patrem namque et Filium cum Sancto Spiritu cognoscere vita est æterna, beatitudo perfecta, summa voluptas. Oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quanta claritas, quanta suavitas, et quanta jucunditas maneat nos in illa visione, quando Deum facie ad faciem videbimus; qui est lux illuminatorum, requies exercitatorum, patria redeuntium, vita viventium, corona vincientium.”—*Bernard, Meditationes, c. i.*

God, the common Father of mankind, and are members of His only-begotten Son, whose work in the soul of man on earth may be summed up in this, that He came to make peace, to unite the divided, and to reconcile the alienated.¹ Chrysostom.

(3) Because they shall be owned as the faithful sons of God, and shall share with Christ Jesus in the inheritance of heaven. Corn. & Lap.

If all *peacemakers* are pronounced by our Blessed Lord to be *blessed*, blessed beyond words will they be who strive to maintain concord in the Church of God, and who endeavour to restore the peace which has been lost through the sins, the variance, and separation of the members of Christ's one body. Beaux Amis.

Let us note that our Blessed Lord first utters that Beatitude which relates to the love of God—that purity of heart, which is the image of God, and without which we cannot do His will—and then speaks of that which immediately concerns our neighbours. *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God*, the Maker of peace; and *Blessed are the peacemakers* who bring together and unite divided brethren.² Th. Aquinas.

(10) *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* Luke vi. 22.
Rom. v. 8.

As in the first Beatitude, so in this last, the promise to those who are *persecuted for righteousness' sake* is the same, *the kingdom of heaven*. In this present Beatitude all those which have gone before seem to be included; for he who is really righteous, and for that righteousness' sake suffers persecution, is already poor in spirit. He has mourned over his own sins, and he mourns over the sins of others. He is meek towards all men. He hungers and thirsts after that righteousness, for the sake of which he is content to suffer persecution. He is merciful to others. He is pure of heart, and through that purity of heart is a peacemaker. To all such persecution comes as the lot ordained by God to try and strengthen their faith, for *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*. This Beatitude is placed last, as implying that when we have attained, by God's mercy, to the blessedness which has been already Rupertus.
2 Tim. iii. 12.

¹ "Pacifici filii Dei vocabuntur, quia habent officium filii Dei: ad hoc enim Filius Dei venisse dicitur in mundum, ut congregaret dispersa."—Aquinas.

² Thus when He who is *the God of peace* came and offered Himself a *peace*

offering on the cross, so *making peace* [Ephes. ii. 15], even the heathen centurion was moved to fulfil this Beatitude, and to cry, *Truly this was the Son of God* [Matt. xxvii. 54].

Th. Aquinas. promised, that then neither *tribulation*, nor *distress*, nor *persecution*, nor *famine*, nor *nakedness*, nor *peril*, nor the *sword*, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹

Rom. viii. 35, 39.

The whole of this last Beatitude is promised to those who endure, as the seven preceding ones have been promised to those who do His will. This is placed the last, as though it were the most difficult of all things to maintain our faith under the storm of persecution. They who endure through-

Th. Aquinas. out the fiery trial are *blessed*—

(1) Because persecution separates us from the world, and, in doing so, unites us closer to God.

(2) Because we suffer for righteousness' sake—for God, who is the Blessed and Righteous One.

(3) Because in so suffering we are made like to Christ and are conformed to His image, who endured the sharpest persecutions at the hands of men, and submitted meekly even to death upon the cross.

Corn. à Lap.

Our Blessed Lord says not that they who are persecuted shall at some future time inherit or possess glory and the kingdom, but that they already have it—*theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. He who suffers for Christ's sake in this world, has Him for a sure possession, and in Him has righteousness, peace, and joy, and, therefore, a kingdom.² But if this blessedness is promised here, and even given whilst men are upon earth, what must be the measure of that unspeakable blessedness of which we shall partake when we come into His presence? For great as is the blessedness which His saints possess on earth by having Him as their guide, their comforter, and their reward, immeasurably greater is that bliss and that blessedness of which they will be partakers when they come into His presence in glory.³

Sylveira.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, whether that persecution comes from man's own nature or from the hands of others:—

Bernard.

(1) By reason of the sharp struggle and conflict within

¹ "Cum patimur vetus noster homo non gaudet, quia vetus est, nec tantum pondus ferre sufficit: At novus homo, largè aliter, fortis est et robustus, nova creatura quæ renovatur (cum vetus ille corrumpitur), quæ in infirmitate perficitur, quæ cum infirmior videtur, tunc potentior est."—*Paulus de Palacio*.

² "Tam consummatum in patria quam inchoatum in via."—*Avancinus*.

³ "Gustate, proinde, et videte quo-

niam suavis est Dominus. Et huic suavitati, huic sapor, huic sapientia, quæ verè trahitur de occultis, omne quod desideratur non valet comparari. Quid enim? Miraris in sole splendorem, in flore pulchritudinem, in pane saporem, in terra fœcunditatem? Sed à Deo hæc universa donata sunt: nec dubium quin multò amplius reservaverit Sibi quam dederit creaturis."—*Bernard, in Festa Omnium Sanctorum, Serm. i. § 4.*

him in his endeavour to resist the temptations and enticements of the flesh and to beat down sin; or whether it come—

(2) From the hands of the world, through its enmity to God and the sons of God. Hugo de S. Charo.

In these words our Blessed Lord reproves the mistake of those who regard the trials and persecutions of the world as unmixed evil. He shows us that there is another light in which we are to view them—that they are the tests by which we may prove the reality of our Christianity, and may turn them into the source and materials of blessedness in us. Happy that man of whom the Spirit and the Bride can say, *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for My name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.* Rev. 11. 2, 3.

Persecution tests the reality of all those virtues which have been before spoken of. Those virtues which endure trial and tribulation are the only real ones.¹ Barradius.

Let us note that our Blessed Lord does not mention the person of the persecutor. It is the cause of the persecution which is to be a source of blessedness to us: persecution must be *for righteousness' sake*. It is this to which we are to look—whether the cause be indeed God's cause; whether the doctrine for which we contend and suffer be indeed His. Pseudo-Chrysostom.

(11) *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.*² Luke vi. 22.
1 Pet. iv. 14.

This is not a new Beatitude, but the appropriation of that which has gone before to the immediate disciples and hearers of our Blessed Lord. After having in general terms declared that all who are *persecuted for righteousness' sake* are *blessed*, He turns to His own followers especially, and, with a perfect knowledge of those troubles and trials which should befall them, says, *Blessed are ye* who shall endure this persecution of which I have just spoken. Jansen Yp.
Th. Aquinas.

Blessed He declares them to be when men shall revile them, shall reproach and insult them to their face, as well

¹ "Vidua est virtus quam non patientia firmat."—*Pet. Blessensis*.

² "Triplex potest distingui persecutio, ut notant D. Paschasius lib. 3 in Matth., Albertus Magnus, S. Thomas, Hugo; cordis, operis, et oris. Et hæc

tres persecutiones hinc ponuntur. Persecutio cordis: *Cum maledixerint vobis homines.* Insectatio operis: *Et persecuti vos fuerint.* Persecutio oris: *Et dixerint omne malum; scilicet verbum.*" —*Sylveira*.

Vatablus. as say all manner of evil against them—that is, shall slander them in their absence. *Blessed* when men assail them with persecution, with open violence, as well as with secret snares and malignant and false accusations. We must note, however, that this blessedness is only promised to those who are charged with evil deeds and evil lives *falsely*, and who are so accused for the sake of Christ.¹

Augustine. And the blessedness promised here to those who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are meek, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who are merciful, who are pure in heart, who are peacemakers, and who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, is not a blessedness promised to some few of the members of Christ's Church. It is promised to the multitudes, to all those who follow Christ—to all such is this word spoken, this promise made, of blessedness. Hence He says not of one merely that he is blessed—*beatus*, but of the many, of all, that they are blessed—*beati*. Blessed are they who enter into His fold here, and enter it by the way of His commandments, and abiding therein shall enter into that blessedness and rest which remaineth for the people of God.

Chrysostom.
Salmeron.
2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.
Luke vi. 23.
Acts v. 41;
vii. 52.
Rom. v. 3.
1 Thess. ii. 15.
James i. 2.
1 Pet. iv. 13.
Gloss. apud Anselm.
Bengel.
Salmeron.

(12) *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

Rejoice in your heart, *be exceeding glad*, or exult (ἀγαλλιᾶσθε) outwardly with your body,² so that men may see your joy, as they saw the glory which beamed in the face of Stephen.³ *For great is your reward*, not merely *great* in comparison with things on earth, but *great* because He who promised it and who will give it is *great*, the Infinite God, the possessor

¹ "Martyrem non facit pœna sed causa."—Augustine, Ep. 61. "Qui mendaciter vituperatur et propter Deum beatus est."—Mariana.

² Hence in the similar, if not parallel, passage in St. Luke (vi. 23), we have the word σκιρτήσατε, which is used by the classical writers to signify the leaping and bounding of animals. Compare Hom. Il. xx. 226, 228; Eurip. Phœn. 1125; and Æsch. Prometh. 1806, where it is used metaphorically of the violence of the winds.

³ "Gaudium illa sola delectatio est, quæ rationem sequitur ex qua delectatione resultat in appetitu sensitivo mo-

tus exterior qui dicitur *exultatio* qui est passio ejusdem appetitus. Gaudium itaque non in appetitu sensitivo sed ab intellectu nempe in voluntate suscipitur. Est enim motus voluntatis quæ non est volitio sed passio sive affectus. Verumtamen inter *gaudium* et *exultationem* secundum proprium significatum hoc interest quod *gaudium* est affectio animi, dum ad mensuram rationis lætatur neque ultra modum foras effunditur. *Exultatio* vero cum ita movetur ut exterius præcipuè in vultum immodicè egrediatur. Illud igitur *gaudium* beatorum ex exuberantia *gaudium* et *exultatio* nuncupatur."—Stella.

of boundless riches, so that His bounty cannot be numbered, cannot be measured, but is like Himself, incomprehensible, immeasurable. Luca Brug.

For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. So, for the same reason, because of the Messiah who was to come, as the disciples of Christ would be persecuted for the sake of Him who had come already into the world. Before you : that is, who before you have delivered this message of God ; who before you have been sent into the vineyard of God ; and who before you have suffered similar persecutions to those which ye shall endure. So that no new evil, He tells them, shall befall them, but only such as others have tasted and have already overcome. Salmeron.
Luca Brug.

In the midst of persecution and affliction from the world there is at all times a consolation and an encouragement inspired by the remembrance of the sufferings of others, who, for the same cause as ourselves, have endured like persecution, and by the knowledge that in all which happens to us we are not without companions. Remigius.

We are, then, bidden by our Blessed Lord to *rejoice and be exceeding glad* in the midst of our sufferings—

(1) Because by the endurance of persecution and wrong we are perfected in our blessedness.

(2) Because of the greatness of the reward which is laid up in heaven for such as endure the persecutions of earth and who yet preserve their faith unshaken.

(3) Because we are thereby made like to the prophets of God—to Isaiah, to Jeremiah, to Zacharias, and to others who have suffered persecution for righteousness' sake from the hands of their brethren. Corn. & Lap.

But it is not enough for any of us to know that they are *blessed* who are *pure in spirit*, who *mourn*, who are *meek*, who *hunger and thirst after righteousness*, who are *merciful*, *pure in heart*, *peacemakers*, and sufferers for the kingdom of heaven's sake. What men desire to know for their own comfort and consolation is, whether they themselves are of the number of the blessed.¹ Hence our Blessed Lord, at the close of these Beatitudes, lays aside the abstract or

¹ "Si igitur beatitudo est regnum coelorum, coelestes efficiamur et in nobis regnemus : si terra, simus stabiles et firmi in vocatione : si consolatio, toleremus tribulationes : si satietas, jejune-
mus modò : si misericordiæ magnæ consecutio, utamur modica nostra erga fratres benignitate : si visio Dei, assues-
camus divinis contemplationibus et

meditationibus fidei : si filiorum Dei appellatio, vocari hypocritæ vel falsi Christiani sustineamus : si copiosa merces in cœlis, non solum persecu-
tiones atque opprobria propter Chris-
tum non fugiamus, sed etiam libenter amplectamur et tamquam rem honorifi-
cam et pretiosam ambiamus."—*Salme-
ron*,

general terms which He had hitherto used, and applies them to those who heard, and, through them, to us, by saying, *Ye are the blessed ; and by bidding each of us rejoice and be exceeding glad in the midst of all our sufferings.*

Salmeron.

But what is that reward which is here called *great* ? It is no ordinary gift of Divine grace, it is Christ Himself. He is the Land promised to the meek, for He is the priceless Treasure contained in the field, to obtain which the man of God *sellet* all that he hath and *buyeth* the field itself. He is the Comfort and Consolation to those who mourn, of whom the Holy Spirit spake when, in the prediction of Christ's coming, He bade Isaiah cry, *Comfort ye, comfort ye My people.* He is that Fulness which can alone satisfy those who hunger and thirst for righteousness' sake, since He is the Living Bread, *the Bread of God which cometh down from heaven* to satisfy the desires of all God's people. He is the Great Mercy which is given to the merciful, and which they shall find in His temple. *Suscepimus, Deus, misericordiam Tuam in medio templi Tui.* He is God, whom we shall see hereafter face to face by means of that purity which at the first He *wrought in us.* He is the Son of God in essence, of whose name and dignity, as *fellow-heirs* with Him, He makes us to be partakers, in making us peacemakers. He is that precious pearl which is found in the midst of the sea of persecution and trouble by those who suffer for His sake, and who keep their garment of righteousness unsullied. In one word, Christ, the Blessed One, is not only the Giver of the blessedness which He here promises, but He is Himself the unspeakable Gift, the Crown, the Glory, and the Blessedness of all His people.

Matt. xiii. 44.

Isa. xl. 1.

John vi. 33.

Ps. xlvii. 9,
Vulgate.

Isa. xxvi. 12.
Rom. viii. 17.

Salmeron.

* * * " Domine Jesu Christe, qui ut altiora virtutum culmina doceres in montem cum discipulis ascendisti, ibique beatitudines et virtutes sublimes docuisti, et præmia singulis congruentia promisisti, da mihi fragili ut Tuam vocem audiens studeam per virtutum exercitium habere meritum, quatenus Te miserante consequar et premium.

Fac ut considerans mercedem opus mercedis non recusem, sed spes æternæ salutis mitiget in me dolorem medicinæ presentis et accendat animum meum ad alacritatem operis. Fac me miserum nunc beatum beatitudine viæ per gratiam et tandem beatum beatitudine patriæ per gloriam. Amen." — *Ludolph.*

••• Commentators have from the first doubted whether the discourse of our Saviour which St. Matthew has preserved is the same as that recorded by St. Luke. Modern critics for the most part are of opinion that the account of the two Evangelists relate to the same sermon. This view is one beset with difficulties—difficulties, however, which, like most of the so-called Scripture difficulties, are difficulties arising from our want of knowledge, and not from any which are inherent in the Scriptures themselves. At best we can but say we know not whether the two Evangelists are narrating the same occurrence or two different ones. We must confess that we have a difficulty, but not that the Scripture presents a difficulty. On this Wouters (*Dilucidationis Select. Sacrae Scripturae Liber*) observes: “Nonnulli interpretes existimant sermonem istum qui describitur Matt. v. esse diversum ab eo qui refertur Lucæ vi. propter apparentem quarundam circumstantiarum differentiam. Rectius tamen S. Ambrose in Lucam, Chrysost., Theophylactus, et alii censent esse eundem: et ita etiam sensit S. P. August. lib. ii. *De Cons. Evang.* cap. 19.

“Hæc sententia probatur ex eo, quod habeat uterque sermo idem initium et eundem finem. Deinde etiam circumstantiæ videntur eadem: nam uterque Evangelista dicit quod Christum secutæ sint multæ turbæ, et quod post finitam concionem Christus curaverit leprosum, ac deinde intraverit Capharnaum, et ibi sanaverit servum centurionis.”—(Patavii, 1778, tom. ii. p. 245.) On this question an older commentator remarks: “Antequam sermonem explanemus, videndum est an sermo iste sit idem qui refertur à Luca, vi. à v. 20. Quòd non sit idem ex eo probari videtur, quòd hi duo Evangelistæ in quatuor discordant: nempe, in loco sermonis; quia hic apud Matthæum fuit mons, apud Lucam locus campestris: in situ prædicantis; nam apud

Matthæum dicitur Christum sedisse; apud Lucam, stetisse: in numero populi audientis; nam apud Matthæum sermo habitus est ad discipulos; apud Lucam, ad turbas: tandem in quantitate sermonis; nam Matthæus plura ponit quàm Lucas. Quòd autem idem sermo sit demonstrari videtur; quia in utroque Evangelistâ incipit à beatitudine paupertatis, et ab utroque clauditur hac sententiâ, *Qui enim audit sermones Meos, similis est homini ædificanti super petram*, infra vii. 24, et Luc. vi. 48. Hinc expositores in diversas sententias abiire: nam Augustin. lib. ii. *De Consens. Evang.*, cap. 19, utrumque problematicè amplectitur. D. Basilus *Lib. de Baptism.*, D. Anselmus, Albertus Mag., Lyranus, et Toletus ad cap. vi. Lucæ, primum defendunt. Abulensis verò q. 2, et Maldonatus, quibus favere videtur Chrysost. Hom. xv., secundum tenent. Sed primam sententiam ut probabiliorem amplector cum Sylveira, tom. ii. lib. iv. q. 2, n. 13, cum quo ita ordinandus est textus Evangelicus ex Toletò citato. Deambulans Dominus per totam Galilæam, ut vidimus superiori cap. v. 23, et videns magnam hominum multitudinem, de qua ibid. v. 25, ascendit in montem, ut hîc dicitur: sedens habuit hunc sermonem: à monteque descendens leprosum curavit, cujus meminit Lucas, cap. v. 12. Nec statim intravit Capharnaum, sed aliquos post dies, in quibus facta sunt quæ à Lucâ narrantur citato, cap. v. et vi., de electione Apostolorum, ac de sermone in loco campestri: in quo quidem multa interseruit ex his quæ ad discipulos docuerat in monte: et tunc intravit Capharnaum, et puerum centurionis curavit. Nec contra hoc facere videatur illud infra vii. 28: *Et factum est, cum consummasset Jesus verba hæc, admirabantur turbæ super doctrinâ Ejus*. In quibus verbis videtur docere Evangelistam hunc sermonem factum esse etiam coram turbis. Nam juxta Augustin citatum turbæ appellantur à Matthæo discipulorum caterva, ex qua

Apostolos elegit. Vel potest dici cum Barrada, tom. ii. lib. vii. cap. 1, Matthæum scribere turbas admiratas, quia illam doctrinam quam Christus discipulis tradiderat in monte tradidit etiam postea turbis in loco campestri; et de admiratione hîc habitâ locutum esse."—*Matthæus explanatus ab Emmanuele ab Incarnatione* (Ulyssipone, 1713).

As to the difference which some persons have noted between the statement of St. Matthew that our Lord "went up into a mountain," and that in St. Luke, that in uttering the discourse recorded in his Gospel "He came down and stood in the plain," see note at p. 499. Christ stood "in the plain," the plateau on the mountain, or on a plain in the mountainous country.

APPENDIX.

For the Gospel at the Baptism of Adults see the Commentary for Trinity Sunday.

For the second Gospel in the Service for the Ordering of Priests see the Commentary for the Tuesday in Whitsun Week, and that for the Second Sunday after Easter.

For the second Gospel in the Service for the Consecrating of a Bishop see the Commentary for the First Sunday after Easter.

For the Gospel in the Accession Service see the Commentary for the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

OFFICE FOR PUBLIC BAPTISM OF INFANTS.

ST. MARK x. 13—16.

(13) *They brought young children¹ to Christ, that He should touch them; and His disciples rebuked those that brought them.* Matt. xix. 13.
Luke-xviii.
15.

THE parents of these *young children* had witnessed many miracles wrought by Christ. His touch had given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, healing to the leper, life to the dead;² and with the bodily healing He had conferred spiritual blessings, and had forgiven the sins of those who came, as it would seem, merely for the removal of disease. Hence the parents of these *children* brought them to Him that He should lay His hands upon them, and give them His blessing, so that they might obtain a spiritual benefit. It would not appear from the accounts given by the three Evangelists that these children were brought to our Lord to be healed of any bodily infirmity, since, had this been the case, we should have read, as in the history of His miracles of corporeal healing, that He cured them of their disease. It is clear, then, that it was a spiritual benefit—His blessing—which was sought for; and this they obtained. Maldonatus.

Whitby.

And of those who were thus brought to Him there seems to be two classes: the children (*τὰ παῖδιά*) who could come

¹ “Non satis constat, neque ex hoc loco, neque ex Matt. xix. 13, neque ex Lucæ xviii. 15, an parvuli isti fuerint infantes qui nec fari nec incedere possent. Apud Lucam quidem vocantur infantes, sed tamen ibidem dicitur Dominus convocasse eos. Istud enim, *convocans illos*, ad infantes, non ad discipulos, referendum esse, patet ex Græco: sicut Matt. xviii. 2 dicitur advocasse puerum et statuisset in medio discipulorum. Non advocantur autem, aut convocantur, nisi qui per se ac-

cedere et intelligere aliquid possunt.” —*Estius in Difficiliora S. S. Loca.*

² “Ideo Jairus rogabat eum ut imponeret manum super filiam suam ut viveret, et sic tetigit eam; et duos cæcos, quos illuminavit, tetigit; et cæcum natum; et cum suscitavit adolescentem tetigit loculum. Et ideo credentes Judæi quod illi quos tangeret liberarentur ab incursibus dæmonum et ab aliis malis, offerebant ei parvulos tangendos.” —*Stella.*

Matt. xix. 13.
Mark x. 13.
Luke xviii.
13.
Lienard.

Gen. xlviii.
9-14.

Jans. Gand.

Jerome.

Corn. & Lap.
Bredembach.

Barradius.

Tostatus.

Bruno
Astensis.

to Him when He called them to His side; the infants (τὰ βρέφη) whom He took into His arms, and who would seem to have been too young to come of themselves. His call and His love was not limited to any age, as it was not confined to any condition of mankind.¹ These infants and youths were all brought in order that, as Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh, and in accordance with the custom amongst the Jews, they should receive a blessing by the laying on of His hands. Both the parents of these children and His disciples appear to have regarded Him only as human, as a great prophet: hence the disciples *rebuked those that brought the young children*; ² thinking that He would be weary, and would resent the importunities of the crowd; and that children were beneath His notice, unworthy of coming to Him, or were incapable of receiving any blessing from Him; so little did His disciples yet understand of the great mystery of His humiliation. Christ by His rebuke taught them, and has left for ever this lesson to us, that none are beneath His notice, and that even those who are not capable of understanding His doctrine, who cannot apprehend Him by the intellect, can yet receive His blessing, and be taken into His arms as infants are taken in baptism; for as these children were blessed at this time by Christ, so are those who are now brought in faith to Christ, received by Him, and partake of His blessing given through the hands of His ministers.³

Many there are who think the purpose of God is fulfilled and His work advanced chiefly by the ingathering of the wise and learned and influential into His Church, and who neglect the young, the poor, and the simple. So to do is to forget the lesson of Christ's life and the teaching of this part of the Gospel.

These children were brought to Christ *that He should touch them*. Christ touches us—

(1) In order to correct us. Of this touch Job speaks

¹ "Matthæus et Marcus habent, *Parvuli*: Lucas verò, *Infantes*. Infantia primo ætatis septennio definitur ac determinatur: parvuli in ætate jam sunt majores, ut ait Lyranus. Omnes in illa puerorum turbâ, infantes et parvuli, fuerunt oblatis (ut ait D. Paschasius) ad ostendendum, quod nullam ætatem respuit Dominus."—*Emm. ab Incarnatione*.

² "Quod in Marco legimus 'discipulos comminatos offerentibus' non est aliud quam quod reliqui duo dicunt,

'eos increpasse illos:' nam Græcis apud omnes tres Evangelistas idem est verbum, nempe ἐπιτιμᾶω, quod interpret nunc vertit increpare, nunc comminari."—*Jans. Gand.*

³ "Parvulos offerebant, quia credebant quod qui tangeretur ab Eo, de cætero à dæmonibus non infestaretur; ideo Ecclesia accepit in consuetudinem, quod parvulis exhibeantur sacramenta Ecclesiæ ut magis confirmantur."—*Th. Aquinas.*

when he cries, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.* Job xix. 21.

(2) In order to console us. Thus Daniel speaks: *I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but He said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. Now as He was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but He touched me, and set me upright.* Dan. viii. 17, 18.

Again, let us note that Christ is touched—

(1) By faith. Thus, when the multitudes thronged around Christ and pressed upon Him, yet of one only are we told that she touched Him. Luke viii. 45, 46.

(2) By prayer, as when Isaiah says, *There is none that calleth upon Thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee: for Thou hast hid Thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.* Isa. lxiv. 7.

From this example of our Blessed Lord the Church has derived her practice of laying on of hands in Confirmation and Ordination; and this we know was the custom of the Apostles, and has been so continued from the beginning of the Church. Thus we read: *Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.* And again St. Paul exhorts St. Timothy: *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.* Corn. à Lap. Acts viii. 17. 1 Tim. iv. 14.

They who then brought young children to Christ thought Him merely human—a great prophet sent by God, but still only human; yet they believed that by His hands a blessing could be conferred on their children. We know that He is not only perfect Man, but also God. Had we, then, like faith with this multitude, we should not only know that His hands can give us all spiritual things, but we should go in faith to be healed of every one of our spiritual infirmities.¹

¹ “Offerebant Judæi parvulos Domino, qui tangebatur eos et orabat pro eis. En ubi tota nostra salus est! Primum, si, Christiane, iturus es in cælum, offeras te Deo necesse est. Christus sacerdos est et hostia, qui Se Deo obtulit in cruce. Nos etiam ideo sacerdotium regale sumus, ut nosmet Deo offeramus in nostra cruce. Et quidem animæ Deo oblatæ virgines illæ sunt quæ Regi offeruntur, uti habetur in Psalmo [Ps. xlv. 14]. . . . Ubi verò te Domino obtuleris, optandum est ut Ille te tangat. Vita car- bonum est, si tangantur ab igne: salus

infirmi, si penetretur à medicina: vita mortui, si tangatur à vita. Salus pueri fuit tangi ab Eliseo: salus leprosi tangi ab aquis Jordanis. Salus ergo et vita nostra est tangi à potentia Christi. . . . At non est satis semel à Christi manu tangi, nisi et Ipse fundat preces pro nobis. Tanta est perpetua miseria nostra, ut indigeat continuè adjuvari à continua oratione divina. Tam est nihil, nostrum nihil: ut perpetuo ruat in nihil, nisi prohibeatur ab orationibus Christi”—*Paulus de Palacio.*

1 Cor. xiv. 20.
1 Pet. ii. 2.

(14) *But when Jesus saw it, He was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.*¹

Jerome.

He was *much displeased* that His disciples should hinder the importunities of those who came seeking help from Him, as though He could be ever weary of the prayers of those who needed His mercies. He was *displeased* at their want of faith, who seemed to have regarded wholly or chiefly His human needs.

In addition to the lesson taught us by His displeasure, Christ here teaches us these three truths:—

(1) The dignity of childhood; the place which the young have in His eye: *Suffer the little children to come unto Me.*¹

(2) The example which childhood affords to every member of His Church: *Of such is the kingdom of God.*

Paschasius.

Origen.
Jerome.
Augustine.

(3) The fact that no age, no condition of life, and no faith, however imperfect it may be, is rejected by God.²

Of such is the kingdom of God—not, that is, of these children only, but of all who are like them: like in manners, not in age; like them in moral qualities, not in the fact of their infancy.³ *Of such—*

Emin. ab
Incarnat.

(1) Not only those who were at that time before the bodily eye of Christ, but all children; hence He says not, *Suffer these children*, but, generally, *Suffer the little children to come unto Me.*⁴

Tostatus.

(2) Not only all children, but all who are like children, who are childlike in disposition.⁵

Those who enter heaven must be like children: but if we must become like them in order to obtain this blessing, how much more will they receive this gift; how much more fitted

¹ “Τὰ παῖδια, the little children. Hoffenreffer renders it *infantulos*, ‘little infants.’—Τοιοῦτων, of such, i. e. infants. Τοιοῦτος denotes substance combined with quality: see Acts xxii. 22.”—Bengel.

² “*Sinite parvulos* quin eos reprehendatis, prout fecistis. Non dixit ‘Sinite parvulos istos,’ ut significaret se loqui de parvulis humilitate, candore ac vitæ innocentia.”—*Emin. ab Incarnatione.*

³ “Non sunt prohibendi imperfecti venire ad perfectionem.”—*Th. Aquinas.*

⁴ The Persian Version paraphrases

these words by “for of those who have been humble as these little children is the kingdom of heaven.”

⁵ “Significanter dixit *talium*, *non istorum*, ut ostenderet non ætatem regnare sed mores, et his qui similes haberent innocentiam et simplicitatem præmium repromitti: Apostolo quoque in eandem sententiam congruente, *Frates, nolite pueri effici sensibus, sed malitia parvuli estote* [1 Cor. xiv. 20]; sensu autem ut perfecti sitis.”—*Jerome.*

⁶ “*Talium* dixit significanter *non istorum*. Quasi dicat: mores regnant, non ætas.”—*De la Fuente.*

for Christ's blessing and for spiritual grace are those who are not only *such*, but who possess fully the requisites for obtaining this blessing, who are indeed children. It is not, then, the will of Christ that infancy should be repelled, but rather that of Herod, who slew the young children under the age of two years; or of Pharaoh, who condemned the children of the Israelites to destruction. To hinder the children of every age and condition from coming to and receiving a blessing from the hands of the Saviour is to copy Idumæan or Egyptian cruelty, to imitate Herod or Pharaoh, not to imitate the example of our Blessed Lord, who called them to Him, the Source of Life, in order that in Him they might find their true life.¹

Ferus.
Hengsten-
berg.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

What, then, is necessary is that every one who comes to Christ should be *such* as these whom, in the time of His incarnate life, He took into His arms. *Such*—

(1) In their freedom from malice. Hence the injunction: *Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.*

1 Cor. xiv.
20.

(2) In their single-mindedness and trustfulness. Hence the command: *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.*

Prov. iii. 5,
6.

(3) In the innocency of their life, their freedom from sinful lusts, to which St. Paul refers when he bids Timothy to keep himself pure.

1 Tim. v. 22.

(4) In the transitory character of their wrath, in accordance with the Apostolic injunction, *Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.*

Ephes. iv.
26.

(5) In their truthfulness. *In whose mouth is found no guile.*

Rev. xiv. 5.

(6) In their docility and obedience to those who are set

¹ "Quomodo, inquis, baptismi capaces sunt, qui fidei nondum sunt capaces, cum Christus hæc duo conjunxerit ac fidem præposuerit, *Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit*? Audi, unde scis parvulos non habere fidem? Quia, inquis, non habent usum rationis. Et quid ratio ad fidem? Nonne, juxta Paulum, ut fides constet, ratio captivanda est in obsequium Christi? [2 Cor. x. 5.] Denique, ubi constat fides tua dum dormis? Aristotelis quidem sententia est, quod miser et felix dimidio vitæ nihil differunt, uterque enim dormiunt nocte et nihil agunt, sive felicitatis sive infelicitatis. Sed absit ut

Christianus dormiens etiam nihil differat ab impio. Audi Paulum: *Qui manducat*, inquit, *Domino manducat: qui vivit, Domino vivit: qui moritur, Domino moritur.* Hunc imitari possum ac dicere: Qui vigilat, Domino vigilat: qui dormit, Domino dormit: hoc est verè Christianus ubicumque fuerit, et quodcumque agat, Domini est et Dominum habet præsentem; quod sine fide non fit. Cum igitur etiam dormiens fidem habeat, qui tamen nihilo plus ratione utitur quam puer, cur non et pueris fidem dare posset et Deus?"—*Ferus in Matthæum.*

Prov. ix. 10.
Ephes. vi. 1.
Hugo de S.
Choro.

over them; for the fear of the Lord is the wisdom; and the knowledge of the Holy is and the exhortation of the Holy Spirit is, *Children parents in the Lord: for this is right.*

Holmstedt.

(7) In their trust and confidence in their parents of which they are not troubled with cares and the means of living.

Victor
Antioch.

(8) They love their parents notwithstanding the which they have received because of their fault correction is to the child of God the mark of his of his Father's rejection.

Quarrel.

(9) In their freedom from pride, and in the ambition.

Hugo de S.
Choro.

Christ in these words to His disciples seem these children should hereafter be saints, why be forbidden to come to Him from whom all derived? If sinners, let them draw near to Him forgive sins. Let not man presume to separate or the other from Him from whom all spiritual Let not man sentence those to banishment from whom they are not condemned.¹

Testatus.

Heb. xiii. 8.

Quarrel.

Matt. xviii. 3.

From the tenderness of Christ towards these of His reproof of His disciples, let us all learn these

(1) That He never turns a deaf ear to the pray

(2) That He is ever ready to do that which He earth to do, to gather into His arms all who draw to Him.

(3) In that He welcomed them: He welcomed youngest, the poorest, the most sinful of the created hand, for He is unchanging in His mercies.

yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

(4) That He loses no opportunity of inculcating and by His example, the virtue of humility, the foundation of all virtues—the gate through which pass who would enter into the kingdom of heaven

(15) *Verily I say unto you, Whosoever receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein.*²

¹ "Sinile parrulos ad Me accedere, (ne illis impedimento sitis) talium est enim regnum celorum. Humilitatem commendat et innocentiam. Ex illis puerulis, veluti fœculis, mel doctrine colligit, docetque nos ex eis quæ sese offerunt rebus aliquid semper spiritualis doctrine et emolumenti, instar apum,

decerpere. Sensus est: hujusmodi puerorum hæc peccato carentium, est reg Si igitur celo digni nunquam habent, cur eos in matia qui ad Me accedat deus.

² "Non intrabit pos

Verily—truly—I, who am the Truth, declare unto you, Whosoever shall not receive, that is—

Fuente.
Emman. Sa.

(1) Shall not dispose himself to receive the word which is preached—the gospel or doctrine of the kingdom of heaven.

Euthymius.
Theophylact.

(2) *Shall not receive* the glory and happiness of heaven; shall not be admitted to the home of the saints and servants of God in the eternal world.

Chrysostom.
Origen.
Augustine.

These two interpretations of our Blessed Lord's words, *the kingdom of God*, are not conflicting interpretations, but are consistent the one with the other. He cannot receive the glory and happiness hereafter as the reward of a life of holiness who does not first receive and obey that Word which is the guide of the Christian's life and the rule of his actions in this world.

This kingdom must be received *as a little child* receives anything from its parents, in docility, in subjection to the parent's will, with love and in purity of heart, not in ignorance and in childishness.

Gorranus.
Fuente.

Here are two lessons for us all—

(1) Let none say that children cannot love God and serve Him, and that only adults can receive His grace and His truth. Those who would love and serve God aright must do so in the spirit and temper of young children, who are made by Christ His pattern for all who would enter into His kingdom. Thus does our Lord beat down the pride which suggests that the grace which we receive of God in order to do His will is in some way connected with our own deserts, and is given as a reward for our coming to Him instead of being a gift enabling us so to come.

(2) Let parents care greatly for their children who are thus dear in the sight of God, and strive by example and prayer to preserve that purity, simplicity of heart, and innocence of sin which are in the nature of childhood, and are held up for the imitation of all those who would *receive the kingdom of God*.

Luca Brug.

(16) *And He took them up in His arms,¹ put His hands upon them, and blessed them.²*

finem: οὐ μὴ εἰσὶ θῆ. Conduplicata negatio vim addit futuri, aut certè modi potentialis: vidè Matt. v. 21."—*Luca Brugensis*.

¹ "He put them into His bosom" is the reading of the Ethiopic. "He took them into His bosom" is that of the Persian version.

² "Quæres, quid Christus manuum

impositione his parvulis contulerit? Respondent communiter Recentiores, præcipuè contulisse salutis augmentum tum corporis, tum animi, Deo Patri commendando illos et consecrando, ut inter filios Dei reciperentur. Unde ait Lucas Brugensis: 'Non dubium quin hi omnes evaserint in viros sanctos ac præclaros.'—*Emm. ab Incarnations*.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.
Collect,
Twelfth
Sunday
after
Trinity.
Chrysostom.

Barradius.

Matt. xix.
13.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Rabanus
Maurus.
Wordsworth.

Isa. xl. 11.

Luke vii. 14.

Mark vii. 35.

John ix. 7.

As the disciples of Christ thought children unworthy of coming to Him, in this action of our Saviour He taught them and us a lesson of humility. He who was the Creator of the world, the Redeemer of mankind, not only permitted children to approach Him, but He went beyond the prayers of those who brought them into His presence; He not only *put His hands upon them*, but, doing more than they asked, as His wont is, for He ever gives us more than we desire or deserve, *He took them up in His arms*, and with this He *blessed them*, not merely uttering a verbal blessing, but conferring on them a very real gift; for when God pronounces any one blessed He at the same time makes them to be so.¹

Those who brought these young children to Christ besought Him that He would *pray* for them. We nowhere, however, read that He did this. They thought Him to be a man: a man indeed of such holiness, that His prayer would draw down a blessing upon these children, but yet only a man. He showed Himself to be more than this, very God, who could of Himself give to them that blessing which they sought. He *blessed them*, and by laying His hands upon them He gave them spiritual grace, and strengthened by His gift those childlike graces which were already in them. In this did our Lord fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah, which had said, *He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom.*²

Those who were touched by Christ were made partakers of Divine grace and inheritors of His kingdom. As when He touched the bier and the young man was restored to life—as when He put His fingers into the ears of the deaf man, and forthwith he heard—as when He touched the eyes of the man born blind, and sent him to the pool of Siloam, and immediately his sightless eye-balls saw plainly—so now does He give life and health to the soul with His life-giving touch. When fire is applied to the dead coals they kindle into life, and when the Life touches the dead body new life spreads through the lifeless corpse; so does His touch now give life to the dead soul, so does He cleanse the sinner from the guilt of sin, unless indeed the sinner himself

¹ “Mettez sur moi, Seigneur, la main invisible de votre divinité; pour prendre puissance sur mon cœur et sur mes sens, pour réprimer en moi tout ce qui vous est contraire, pour me consacrer à Dieu votre Père, comme Sa victime, en vous et par vous.” — *Quesnel*.

² “Rogabit aliquis, quid benedictio

Christi his parvulis contulerit? Respondemus, certum esse Dei benedictionem inanem non esse: siquidem Dei benedicere est benefacere. Si ergo Christus Deus parvulis benedixit, etiam benefecit, beneficiumque aliquod contulit: gratiam videlicet donavit à malis aliquibus præservationem et similia.” — *Barradius*.

hinder by his wilfulness the effect of the mercy of his Saviour and his God.¹ Paulus de Palacio.

St. Matthew adds that when He had blessed these children He *departed thence* on His way to Jerusalem. Matt. xx. 17.

Those on whom He laid His hands at that time He did not call to follow Him at that moment. They were yet infants, and therefore lacked the strength to be able to follow Him and to be His disciples. Origen.

¹ "Omnes igitur curramus ad pedes Christi: non dimittamus Eum donec benedixerit nobis, quemadmodum istis parvulis benedixit: accedamus itaque puri ad virginem, virginis filium; accedamus humiles ad humilem, et humilis

ancillæ filium: accedamus simplici corde ad Agnum immaculatum, *qui peccatum non fecit, nec dolus inventus est in ore Ejus* [1 Pet. ii. 22]; quatenus ab Illo amplexemur, tangamur, et benedicamur."—*Soares*.

••• "Domine Jesu Christe, qui parvulos venire ad Te voluisti, et eis manus imponens benedixisti, præsta mihi misero ut sim parvulus in oculis meis, quatenus gratiam inveniam in oculis Tuæ majestatis; et quod parvuli possident per naturam ego consequar miseri-

corditer per gratiam Tuam; ut meritis omnium parvulorum et humilium Tibi placentium ego ultimus omnium, Te rectore, Te duce, merear ad Te pervenire et a Te benedictione in cœlestibus munerari. Amen."—*Ludolphus*.

THE COMMUNION OF THE SICK.

ST. JOHN V. 24.

Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

THIS verse has probably been selected as the Gospel in the Service for the Communion of the Sick, not only because of the comforting promise of eternal life, but because our Blessed Lord here sums up, and gives as it were in an epitome, the great central truths which are professed in the Creed, and in which the sick person is to avow his full and entire belief. We are here taught—

(1) The need of hearing the Gospel of Christ; and that not with the ears of the body only, but with the heart, the will, the affections of man. *He that heareth My word.*¹

(2) Belief in the ever-blessed Trinity, in the Father and the Son, which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. *He that . . . believeth on Him that sent Me.*

(3) The sinful estate of mankind, the fall through sin into spiritual death, and the consequent condemnation of the whole race of Adam, who through the sin of the first man have come into condemnation.

(4) The need which we all have of a Redeemer and Mediator, through whose passion, death, and resurrection we pass from death unto life.

(5) The happiness which is given to those who believe in and who obey God in this life, and in obeying Him possess Him who is everlasting life.

¹ “Qui verbum Meum audit. Tale est ac si diceret, qui Meum doctrinam audiens custodit. Ille enim bene audit qui audiens obedit. Non enim auditores legis justi sunt apud Deum sed

factores [Rom. ii. 13].”—*Bruno Asteris.*

“Ἀκούειν sæpe ut Hebr. שָׁמַע connotat, obtemperare, obedire, ut infra viii. 47.”—*Rosenmüller.*

(6) That eternal life which after the death of the body is the hope and the reward of the righteous, and which is assured to those who in resisting temptation and in overcoming sin here have *passed from death unto life*. Alex. Nat.

And this declaration of Christ He introduces in the solemn manner with which He was wont to declare very great and important truths—*Verily, verily*. He, the eternal Verity, the *Truth* itself, is here declaring that which is to be noted, not only as a great truth in itself, but one which is of the utmost importance to every man to comprehend: one which is full of such exceeding comfort to the soul, that to remove all doubt Christ adds this solemn confirmation to the truth of His word. How great is the love of God towards us: how great should be our happiness in that our Saviour should condescend to make to us sinners such a solemn protestation of the certainty of this doctrine. Corn. & Lap.

He that heareth, so as to believe and obey, *My word*—that is, the Gospel or doctrine which I declare in fulfilment of My mission from My Father—and *believeth on Him that sent Me*¹—so hears, that is, as to believe on the Father—*hath everlasting life* already, and he *shall not come into condemnation*; shall not be punished for the sins which in past time he had done, and of which in accepting the teaching of Christ he had repented,² *but is already passed from that death* which is the fruit of sin here, and from the consequences of that sin hereafter, *unto that life* of which he has here the foretaste and the pledge, and which he shall possess in its fulness in the life to come;³ so that when he departs from this world he will but pass through or from corporeal death *unto life* eternal—from that death which came through man's sinfulness to that life which he has through the Son. Hugo de S. Claro. Leigh.

He that heareth My word. As the first man fell from God, and falling from Him fell into all evil because he heard not in his heart—that is, heard not believingly—the word of his

¹ “Non ait, qui credit Mihi, sed qui credit Ei qui Me misit: hoc dictum asseverant Chrysostomus, Euthymius, Theophylactus, modestiæ causa, arrogantis notam devitare volens. Sed hæc ratio non est multum valida; nam Joan vii. 38 ait, Qui credit in Me, flumina de ventre ejus fluent. Aptius ergo dicendum cum Cajetano, Toletio, ac Beaux Amis, quod ait, Qui credit in Eum qui misit Me, iste talis credit in mittentem et in missum. Et in hoc denotatur Trinitatis mysterium. Et dum credit Christum Filium Dei missum, mysterium incarnationis profite-

tur.”—Sylveira.

² “Τὸ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται, τοῦτο ἐστίν, οὐ κολάζεται. θάνατον γὰρ οὐ τοῦτόν φησι, ἀλλὰ τὸν αἰώνιον, ὥσπερ καὶ τὴν ζωὴν ἐκείνην.”—S. Chrysostom.

³ The Slavonic version is the only one amongst the old versions of the New Testament which gives this in the future tense, and translates the Greek—μεταβίβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου—by what is equivalent to “shall pass from death unto life.” See Malan's Notes on the Gospel of St. John.

Gen. ii. 17. Maker, *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, so must the healing be by hearing; and as man by believing on the devil inherited death, so by the word and by believing on the Son will he obtain life. It is this life-giving word of Christ which is man's antidote against the poison of the old serpent, who was a murderer from the beginning, and who deceived man to his undoing by his assertion *ye shall not surely die*. It is not said that we are to fast, to give alms, or to pray; these we are enjoined to do, but these are comparatively easy to man: we are here bidden to hear so as to believe, and this is difficult, nay, it is impossible for us to accomplish in our own strength. To live in daily obedience; to live loving, and in our love to serve God; to imitate the pattern of our Lord and Master, and to show forth the power of His death by our death unto sin; to live a life of daily righteousness, daily listening to and daily doing the precepts of Christ, this is involved in our hearing and believing in Christ.

Ferus.

And believeth in Him that sent Me. Note here the force of Christ's words. It is not enough to believe in Him as our teacher, our pattern, our advocate; we must believe in Him as the Incarnate Word of the Father, as sent by Him into the world. We are to believe in the Father, not as abstract providence nor creative energy, but in His relation to that Divine Person who came from heaven—to believe in *Him* as He *that sent* Christ into the world. We are, moreover, to believe in the Father as Almighty love, for we are to believe in Him as the Sender of the Son. And in this was His love manifested to man, in that He sent His only-begotten Son; and that in His gracious gift he who so believes *hath everlasting life*.¹ As to the belief which is demanded from every one of us, it is a belief in Christ who came, and in Him whom He came to manifest, and who sent the Son for this very purpose into the world: it is a belief in Christ incarnate for us, and in the Father from whom He came, and in the Holy Spirit by whom He was incarnate. And to those who so believe, three things are promised:—

Corn. à Lap.

Lampe.

Toletus.

(1) *Everlasting life* in its beginning, for *the gift of God is eternal life*.² He who has God has in Him eternal life, and

¹ “(ἐχει) With hearing and believing, having is also given.”—*Luthardt*.

² Thomas Aquinas, who takes the promise of *everlasting life* to mean the completion, not the beginning, of this life, understands this passage somewhat differently. He says: “Præmium fidei ponit cum subdit: *Habet vitam*

æternam: et ponit tria quæ habebimus in gloria; sed ordine retrogrado. Primo enim consequentur resurrectionem ex mortuis; secundo liberationem a futuro judicio; tertio vitam æternam; quia ut dicitur [Matt. xxv.]: post judicium ibunt iusti in vitam æternam.”—*Comment. in loco*.

he who has God holds Him by means of his continuance in that living faith through which he believed, and in which he is able to see God.

Rom. vi. 23.
Hugo de S.
Charo.
Guillaud.

(2) He who so believes, and steadfastly continues in that belief, *shall not come into condemnation*,¹ but shall obtain the forgiveness of sin, and be kept from sin, so as to escape the final judgment upon the impenitent. He *shall not come into condemnation*:—

(a) Into the condemnation of conscience now, from which he is saved through the forgiveness of his sins.

(b) He shall not come into the future judgment which awaits those who die unrepentant. Alex. Nat.

(3) He *is passed from death unto life*: from the death of sin and corruption into the life of the children of God, and that state of loving obedience which robs death of all its power and of almost all its terrors: he has passed from spiritual death into that real life which he has through his justification in Christ,² so that when physical death comes it shall be the entrance of the soul into changeless and everlasting life. Whilst, then, it is true that the penitent has already *passed from death unto life* because of the presence of God the Eternal Life, it is also true of that future state of happiness and glory, both because of the certainty of the possession and also because the one is the commencement of the other, of which the beginning is now and the consummation after the death of the body. This alone is worthy of the name of life, because the continuance of the wicked away from Him who is the Source of all life is not life, but death.³

Salmeron.
Chrysostom.

Ferus.

Estius.
Hengsten-
berg.

Sylveira.

These words are not a denial of the reality of death, but

¹ "*In iudicium non venit*. Exegesis est illius quod dixit, *habet vitam æternam*. Qui credit in Christum justificatus est à peccatis, vitam habens: sed *justificatus pacem habet apud Deum* [Rom. v. 1]; hoc est, tranquillam pacatamque habet conscientiam. Ergo is non venit in iudicium: id est, huic ne metuenda quidem erit damnatio mortis æternæ (quæ manet incredulos, imò quæ jam habet incredulos) quia credit." —Guillaud.

² "*Transit à morte in vitam*. Nec dico nunc quod transiet à morte in vitam, sed hoc dico, quia verbum Meum audiendo et credendo Ei qui misit Me jam transit à morte animæ. Non dico ad vitam, ut stet secus illam, sed à longe prospiciat et salutet illam, sic ut

Abraham, Isaac, et Jacob, et ceteri patres, qui a longe prospexerunt et salutaverunt illam et defuncti sunt omnes, non acceptis promissionibus hujus: sed hoc dico, quia transit in ipsam vitam brevi transitu; quippe cum ipsum transire non sit aliud quam renasci ex aqua et Spiritu Sancto. Credendo enim dum baptizatur transiit et regeneratus est, et de veteri novus, de perdito inventus, de mortuo vivus factus est. *Nam etsi corpus mortuum, id est, mortale est, propter peccatum, spiritus jam vivit propter justificationem.*" —Rupertus.

³ "Nulla quippe major et prior est mors quam ubi non moritur mora." —Augustinus, *De Civit. Dei*, lib. vi.

Euthymius.

John v. 22.

a promise of the deliverance of the believer in God from eternal death. Christ had before said that the Son giveth life to whomsoever He wills, and that to Him has been committed by the Father the prerogative of judging all men. In the words which are selected for this Gospel, He points out who those are to whom the Son gives this life, and who shall escape the condemnation which comes upon the sinner. He speaks, then :—

(1) Of the revival, or vivification of the soul.

(2) Of the resurrection, the new life given to the body.

Those have life given to them who hear and believe in the Son, and in the Father who sent the Son into the world. Two things are needed to this vivification :—

(1) The declaration of the truth by the Son, who came to give knowledge of the Father and to manifest His love.

(2) The reception of the truth by men, and the engrafting of the words of the Son in the heart through faith. And this truth is, that the only-begotten Son has come into the world in order to be the Light of the world, and that the Father has in His great love to mankind sent Him into the world for this very end.

J. M. S. Gand.

* * * “In that time of terror and of dread, that time full of sadness, have pity, O Lord, on those who confess Thy Passion. Have Thou a care of those who put their trust in Thy love for men, and do Thou forgive their sins. Let Thy tenderness be stirred up for those who invoke Thy holy Name; nor let Thy grace fail us. Rebuke not the ministers of Thy kingdom for their filthy raiment. Let not the light of our lamps be put out. Let not Thy justice be against us. Show the aid of Thy grace against our wickedness.

Pour out the flood of Thy pity on our ungodliness, and wash away our sins, and efface in us whatever is hateful. Give us true and uncorrupt faith, a pure and tranquil life, high and holy gifts, freedom from severe temptations, a departure with due preparation, a good end, richest blessings, lasting delights, inheritance with the saints, and confidence when we stand before Thine awful throne, because Thou art merciful and rich in bounty.” — *Syrian Clementine Liturgy*.

THE MAKING OF DEACONS.

ST. LUKE XII. 35—38.

(35) *Let your loins be girded about,¹ and your lights burning.* Ephes. vi. 14.

OUR Blessed Lord had been speaking to His disciples of worldly cares and perplexities; He had warned them against placing their treasure on earth, and had bidden them to *seek the kingdom of God*. He here cautions them against the love of the world and the engrossing effects of earthly temptations, and calls upon them to be ready at all times for their Master's work; and, because the kingdom of heaven is not far off from them, to hold themselves always in readiness and to cast aside from them every impediment which would hinder their obedience, and their power to do their Master's will. He had told them before that it was their *Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom*; now He tells them what they are to do in order that they may possess it. It is a gift, as all God's mercies are gifts, but He who gives demands watchfulness and earnestness on the part of man.

Luca Brug.

Luke xii. 32.

Corin. & Lap.

Let your loins be girded about. Throw aside, that is, every impediment; let nothing hinder you in the work to which you are called. The metaphor is taken from the way in which persons preparing for some toil and the exercise of physical strength arrange their long garments so that they may not entangle them in the folds of their dress. It is an

¹ "Respexit Christus his verbis morem Orientalium, qui, cum vestibus uterentur ad talos usque demissis, laxioribus, huc illuc diffluentibus, iter suscepturi, vel ministerium facturi, vel quodvis aliud negotium peracturi, eas succingebant, ne ipsis impedimento essent: vide 2 Reg. iv. 29, ix. 1; Jer. i. 17; Luc. xii. 37, xvii. 8; Joh. xiii. 4; Act. xii. 8. Philo, *De Sacrif.*

Ab. et Cai., t. i. p. 174: Προστίραται τὰς ὀσφύς περιζωσμένους ἑτοιμῶς πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν ἔχοντες. Virg. *Æn.* ii. 235: 'Accingunt omnes operi.' Horat. *Sat.* ii. viii. 10: 'Puer alte cinctus;' v. 70: 'Præcincti recte pueri comtique ministrent.' Prop. iv. v. 62: 'Succinctique . . . popæ.' Jam vero h. l. accincti estote est, id. qd. γίνεσθε ἑτοιμοί, *parati estote.*" — Kuinoel.

exhortation frequently used in Holy Scripture, and is a call :—

(1) To diligence and expedition in the work assigned to us, as in the words of the prophet to Gehazi, *Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not: and if any salute thee, answer him not again.* So, also, of our Blessed Lord we read, when He would wash the feet of His Apostles, that He rose from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself.

2 Kings iv.
29.

John xiii. 4.

(2) To bear ourselves manfully and courageously, as:—*Then answered the Lord unto Job, and said, Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto Me.*

Job xl. 7.

(3) To be ready for any work assigned to us by God; as when the Israelites were commanded to depart from Egypt, and were bidden to eat the passover *with their loins girded, with their shoes on their feet and their staff in their hand, and to eat it in haste.*

Exod xii. 11.

There are three classes of men of whom we read these words, and who are bidden to gird up their loins: servants, that they may do the work of their master; soldiers, that they may contend successfully with the enemies of their chieftain; and travellers, that they may make their journey with greater expedition. The Christian bears all these relations. He is the servant of God, the soldier of Christ, the traveller through this vale of tears to his own country in heaven.¹ He is, therefore, bidden to gird up his loins that he may serve more faithfully, that he may fight against his spiritual foes more manfully, and that he may travel through this world with as little incumbrance as need be. These words are Christ's call to earnestness and watchfulness, His exhortation to struggle against and to overcome those temptations by which our spiritual being is perfected, so that when this present life is ended we may attain to that rest which shall never end. In that life, those only shall enter in and be secure who have never been lulled into a false security here, and they shall then fear and tremble who on earth have had no fear of offending against or breaking the law of God.²

Quenel.

Dion. Carth.

Alex. Nat.

¹ "Vestes oblongas et diffuentes accingebant servi, ut expediti essent ad ministrandum; viatores, ut expediti essent ad iter agendum; milites, ut essent expediti ad pugnandum. Christianus servus est Dei, miles Christi, viator in mundo; ideo illi merito

dicitur, *Sint lumbi vestri præcincti.*"—*Alex. Natalis.*

² "Cautos nos facit Christus et vult esse expeditos ad expectanda novissima: ut post novissima quæ sunt in hoc sæculo metuenda, succedat requies quæ non habet finem. Erunt tunc securi,

By the *loins* is meant—

(1) The powers of the mind, the intellect, and affections. Of these the Apostle speaks when, having reminded Christians that they have to wrestle *not against flesh and blood only, but against spiritual wickedness*, he calls upon them to *stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness*.

Ephes. vi.
12, 14.

(2) The strength of the body : that physical nature from whence carnal affections proceed.

Gorranus.

The call to *let our loins be girded about* is, as it concerns all Christians, a call to temperance and a bridling of the flesh, and to the restraint of our passions and appetites. Of this St. Paul speaks when he says, *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things* ; and again : *I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection*. It is a call to diligence and activity in the Christian life ; to a readiness for our Master's work whatever may be our lot in His vineyard ; and to an apprehension and firm hold of the faith, so that we may be able to resist all error and unbelief.¹ It is, in short, a call to lay aside all that can hinder our obedience to the will of God, and to labour strenuously and with a ready and willing mind in every virtue, after the pattern of those who, toiling in earthly occupations, gird up their garments that they may labour the better.

Greg. Hom.
xiii. in
Evan.
Aug. de
Cont. c. vii.

1 Cor. ix. 25,
27.
Augustine.
Theophylact.

Jans. Gand.

Maldonatus.
Cyril.

And here let us note that the hindrance which is to be set aside—the garment which is to be girded—like the hindrances mentioned in another parable, which prevent men from entering in to the marriage feast, are not sins and things in themselves unlawful, but lawful, even necessary, things which are allowed to engross more than their due share of our attention ; the cares of this life, which have their appointed use, but which we turn into evil when we permit them to become anxieties to us. It is right to have a garment, it is not right to allow it to impede us in our duty.

Luke xiv.
18—20.

But, whilst this is a call to all men, it applies more especially to those who are called to minister in spiritual things to the servants and children of God. They are in these words exhorted to diligence in their Master's work, to allow no earthly pursuits to engross their thoughts or to delay the execution of the duties of their calling.² They are to

Jansen Yp.

Salmeron.

qui modo non sunt securi ; et iterum tunc timebunt, qui modo timere nolunt."—*Idem*.

¹ "Lumbos præcingere, plerisque est carnis luxuriam, per continentiam, coarctare ; sed est etiam habitus se ad

opus parantis, ut promptè, et expeditè illud obeat."—*Noranius*.

² "Le detachment de tous les biens du monde est cette ceinture dont nous devons nous ceindre les reins." — *Hurè*.

minister by inward devotion, by the girding up of their mind as well as by the outward tokens of their obedience in their Master's service; for he who is *girt* is not only freer to perform his duty, but bears about with him the marks of preparation for earnest service. Hence it was at the Last Supper, we read that our Master, the pattern and example to every minister in His Church, *girded Himself* to minister to His Apostles; and in the Apocalyptic vision is represented still as *a man clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle*.

Sylveira.

John xiii. 4.

Rev. i. 13.

Barradius.

Rev. xix. 8.

He who would keep his garments—the flesh—pure from evil must gird them up, for the way of life is miry by reason of sin, and foul through the corruption, example, and solicitations of evil men. He that would keep the righteousness which Christ has imparted to him, that robe which is the righteousness of the saints, must in like manner use all diligence in preserving it from contamination with the world.¹

Alex. Nat.
Isa. i. 17.

Ps. xxxiv. 14.

But we are not only called upon to *let our loins be girded about*, we are to have our *lights burning*; not only to cease to do evil by girding up our loins against temptation, and sloth, and indifference to our Master's call, we are exhorted also to *learn to do well, to depart from evil, and to do good*.² Here are two things to be noted: the Christian is to have *lights*, and these are to be *burning*.

Matt. vi. 22.

Simon de
Cassia.

Sourez.

Luca Brug.

Theophylact.

(1) *Lights*. It is significant that it is not light, but *lights* which are to be *burning*; not some one good work or another, not some one act of obedience or another, but universally our whole body is to be *full of light*, full of faith, full of truth, full of holiness; full both within and without, for it is not enough for us to have holiness within us unless it is also evidenced without.³ We are to have faith, which is a light dispelling the darkness of error and of sin, and enabling us to know the will of God and to see the path of His commandments. We are to have our reason clear and unclouded, showing us the dangers which are around us, for this is a light from God and His gift to man. Holy

¹ "Is qui cingulum abjicit, lutulenta via iter faciens oblongas vestes luti inficit sordibus. Lutulenta via est quâ gradimur. Si castitatis cingulum Christianus abjecerit, corpus quod animæ vestis est, spurcissimis sordibus inquinabit."—*Barradius*.

² "Jubentur lumbos accingere et lucernas tenere ac si aperte audiant. Prius in vobismetipsis luxuriam restringite; et tunc, de vobis, aliis bono-

rum operum exempla monstrate."—*S. Greg. Magnus*.

³ "Et lucernæ ardentes in manibus vestris—id est, opera ardentia propter Deum, et lucentia aliis in exemplum. Lucerna enim duo facit. Ceram sive oleum comburit et lumen diffundit. Ad hoc ergo, ut bonum opus sit lucerna, oportet ut ardore divini amoris fiat et aliis præbeat exemplum."—*Hugo de S. Charo*.

Scripture—God's Word—is a light which we are to cherish, for this will enable us to avoid many of the snares of the Evil One, and guide us through the mazes of this evil world; for of this we read, *Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths*; and, *In thy light shall we see light*.

Hofmeister.
Ps. cxix. 105;
xxxvi. 9.

(2) These lights are to be *burning*, not shining merely, since this might arise from vain-glory; the light must be fed and sustained by inward devotion. Many persons are active in the vineyard of God, who possess at the same time none of the spirit of obedience and submission; who do work indeed, but who work not well, not in a spirit of charity and with a simple desire for their Master's glory. We are to have *lights*, and to have them burning.¹ Our lights are burning if fed by the oil of Divine grace, and we are silently and, as it were, instinctively showing forth on all sides and in the face of all men an example of holiness and zeal in our Lord's service.

Bonaventura.

Theophylact.

Bruno
Astensis.

If we would show forth the *lights* which God has given to us, let us remember that they must first burn inwardly, must cleanse us from sinful affections, and hallow our whole soul, as the altar of God was of old hallowed by the fire from on high.

Gorranus.

Good works, holiness of life, are *lights*—

(1) On our own path, for they enable us to see the way in which we are to walk, for *if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God*.²

John vii. 17.

(2) On the path of our brethren. It is by the holiness of God's faithful children that sinners are warned and re-proved of their own evil deeds and of the consequences of their actions.

Hence it was in the early days of Christ's Church that the unwonted spectacle of active love shown towards each other was so efficacious in drawing the heathen from the darkness and error of their lives. For this reason it is that Christ

Stella.

¹ "Non satis est lucere, neque satis est ardere, utrumque Christiano necessarium est; nè sit velut lignum putre aut noctilucæ bestiolæ, quæ in tenebris lucent, sed non ardent, vel nè sit flammæ instar infernalis, quæ ardet non lucet. Lucere vanum, ardere parum, lucere simul et ardere perfectum est."—Hartung.

² "Ἐξωσμένοι δὲ τὰς ὁσφύας, οἱ τὴν πρακτικὴν μετιόντες. τοιοῦτον γὰρ τὸ σχῆμα τῶν ἐργατικῶν, οἷς δεῖ καὶ τοὺς λύχνους προσεῖναι καιομένους.

δεῖ γὰρ τῇ πρακτικῇ προσεῖναι καὶ τὸ τῆς διακρίσεως χάρισμα, ἵν' ἔχοι διαγινώσκειν ὁ πρακτικὸς, οὐ μόνον τί χρὴ ποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ πῶς. πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ τὸ καλὸν ἐποίησαν, οὐ καλῶς δέ. οἱ τοιοῦτοι οὖν τὰς μὲν ὁσφύας ἤσαν περιζωσμένοι, ἔπραττον γὰρ, τοὺς δὲ λύχνους, οὐκ εἶχον καιομένους, τουτίστιν, οὐκ εἶχον τὴν ἐκ τοῦ λόγου διάκρισιν, ἀλλ' ἢ εἰς τύφον ἐνέπεσον, ἢ εἰς ἄλλον ἀπονοίας κρημνόν."—Theophylact.

Matt. v. 16.

gives us this injunction : *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.* The light reflected from the Christian was the means by which God was to be glorified, and sinners drawn from the ways of evil.

Queſnel.

This lamp is to be fed, these lights sustained, by constant reading of God's Word, by meditation on His truth, and by prayer for His grace.

In a lamp which is burning, three things are to be noted : in three ways is it a parable to us :—

2 Cor. v. 1.

2 Cor. iv. 7.

(1) The lamp itself, usually of earth. In this have we our own frailty and the need of God's protecting grace set before us. We are, as our house, our body is, *earthy*; and our treasure, our souls, are in *earthen vessels*.

Hugo de S.
Claro.
Luke xii. 49.

(2) The lamp is fed with oil, the symbol of the Holy Spirit, which is given to us for the sanctification of our heart and affections. Unless this be in us, there can be no true ministry of consolation.

Hugo de S.
Claro.
Luke xii. 49.

(3) The lamp gives out a light, the emblem of that fire of true charity of which Christ spake when He said, *I am come to send fire on the earth.*¹

Augustine.

Our *loins* then will be *girded* when we abstain from evil; our lamps *burning* when we do good. Those who are partakers of Christ, who have received his grace, are to beware of a barren and therefore sinful indolence. Hence, at the Passover, those who partook of the lamb—which was but an image of the True Lamb—and who wore the garb of travellers to show that they had here no abiding city, were not only to have the staff in their hands, but to be girt for labour and service.

Cyril.

John i. 9.

Let the ministers of Him who is *the True Light* remember, that to them are given *lights* for the use of men :—

(1) The word of knowledge for the ignorant, and for those that are out of the way.

2 Cor. xi. 29.

(2) The spirit of compassion for the weak and sinful, which they are to manifest in the spirit of St. Paul, who said, *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?*

(3) The duty of aiding those who are in need and necessity.

In a word, the ministers of Christ's Church are required to manifest the light within them to all around them. They

¹ The Vulgate reading is, "Et lucernæ ardentes in manibus vestris." These latter words, however, are neither in the Greek nor Syriac, and are un-

known to the Greek and most of the Latin fathers. Most commentators, such as Maldonatus, à Lapide, &c., reject these words.

are the true lights in the Tabernacle of God. Let them learn, then, the lessons which Moses taught when, by direction of God, he ordered seven lights to be placed within the tabernacle, the emblem of the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit which the ministers of God are to exhibit, and with which they are to *give light* to the people of God.¹

Gorranus.

Ex. xxv. 37.

(35) *And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.*

The former verse speaks of those who are earnest and ready in their work; this of those who are anxiously expecting their Lord, awaiting His coming with longing desires and joy. As the cherubim in the temple of God were fashioned with extended wings, so must our wings—prayer and good works, longing desire and active working for God—be turned toward Him whom we expect from heaven.²

Estius.

Bengel.

These three things are required of those who would enter into the joy of their Lord:—

(1) The girding up of the loins; on the one hand, temperance in the use of the goods of this life, and, on the other, earnestness in the work which God has set us to do.

(2) Inward holiness and outward righteousness, the care of our own heart, and active charity towards our neighbour.

(3) Patience and longing expectation—that we should be as faithful servants who delight in their lord's presence and desire his return.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Patience makes longing mighty, gives to it its strength; longing makes patience watchful, and preserves it from torpor.

Brauna.

¹ Hence the custom of placing a candle in the hands of the infant or person just baptized, about which we have this rubric and prayer in the Sarum Office Book:—“*Deinde quæsito nomine ponat cereum ardentem in manu infantis, dicens:*

“*N. Accipe lampadem ardentem et irreprehensibilem: custodi Baptismum tuum, serva mandata, ut cum venerit Dominus ad nuptias, possis ei occurrere una cum sanctis in aula cœlesti; ut habeas vitam æternam et vivas in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.*”

² “*Aves cum volare volunt, alas expandunt, sic nos qui Dominum ex-*

pectamus, cordis et desiderii nostri alas in cœlum deberemus extendere. Illi duo Cherubin alas suas expandebant. Ita semper debemus ardenti desiderio et vehementi amore in ipsum Deum inflammari, horam expectare in qua finiatur peregrinatio nostra. Hoc illud est, quod Abraham in ostio tabernaculi sedebat [Gen. xviii. 1]. Et Helias etiam in speluncæ ostio [1 Reg. xix. 13]. Sic nos in ostio hujus vitæ mortis consideratione Dominum expectemus, ut Abraham et Helias: nam si ita expectamus, quemadmodum et illi, nos etiam excipiemus.”—*Stella.*

Gorranus.

The ministers of God are to be *like unto men*, not to animals void of reason: *like unto men* who have an earthly master, and whose diligence in their earthly service is too often a reproach to the negligent servants of the Master in heaven. *That wait for their Lord*, ready at once to welcome him—not waiting until he shall knock to prepare all things for him, but who, having made all things ready, wait in expectation for his coming.

Sylvetra.

The example, then, that is set before Christians is that of servants who *wait*. Let us learn the lessons which this image presents to us.

(1) Servants who know not when their lord will come remain in constant expectation, in watchfulness for his coming. So must we be prepared for the summons of our Lord at every moment of our lives.

(2) They not merely wait, but they prepare with diligence the house for the reception of their lord. So must we have a heart cleansed from evil lusts, and swept diligently, that no habits of evil may be found there.

(3) Those faithful servants who await in expectation the coming of their lord, have their thoughts fixed on him, and their speech is of him. So must our hearts be filled with the thought of our coming Lord, and our talking be of Him.

Stella.

(4) Those servants who expect their lord have their thoughts removed from everything but of his coming. So must our hearts and affections be detached from earth, and centred on our Lord who shall come from heaven.¹

He whom the servants wait for is *their lord*. If we would *wait* aright, we must know Him who is to come to us as indeed our Lord and our God. We must acknowledge Him to be our Lord by the trust we repose in Him, and by the obedience which we render Him. In vain shall we talk of God as our Lord if Satan can at the last day say we are his, since we have obeyed none but him. God is not our Lord if the spirit of lustfulness can claim us, and say truly that all our care has been for the lower appetites of the body. The Lord is not our God if we have served avarice in this life, and have sought first for the perishable things and riches of this life. He is our God in whom our hope is fixed; and if our hope is indeed in the living God, then shall we *wait* ready to receive Him, and expecting His return to us.

Stella.

The wedding from which the Lord *will return* is an image of that union of God with man, of which the most perfect exemplification, and that from which all union must come, is

¹ "Facile contemnit omnia, qui se semper cogitat esse moriturum."—*Jerome*.

the union of God with man in the person of Christ Jesus. Through, and by means of, this condescension of the Eternal Son comes the union of the individual soul with Christ, and that larger and more comprehensive union which is spoken of as *the marriage of the Lamb*; the union of the souls of all the redeemed with God in glory; the perfect happiness of the Church, then wholly triumphant.¹ From this wedding will our Lord *return* when the probation of the Church on earth has been accomplished; when her warfare has been finished, and the number of the redeemed has been fulfilled.

Christians are to be ever waiting for their Lord; for, as at the first Advent He came when the world was unprepared through the sinfulness of men, so when He comes *in like manner* as He went *up into heaven*, men will be almost wholly unprepared for His coming in judgment. As then He will come at the most unexpected moment, He bids us to be always ready, always waiting for that coming, since there is no hour at which He may not come. His followers are to *wait* for Him. They are not to rush forward to anticipate His coming; not to be found restless, and impatient, and serving their own wills instead of obeying Him, but *in quietness and in confidence* they are to abide the time when He shall call them to Himself.

By His knocking is meant the indications of His advent when it will be too late to begin to prepare for His coming, and when those who are His true followers will have no need for such preparation, for they will be always ready. This, then, is not the invitation of mercy of which we read, *Behold, I stand at the door and knock* for admission to the heart of the individual in this life; but His coming to judge the quick and the dead, when He *shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God*; and the words are addressed to those who are already His servants: a call to them that they should not grow weary, but should be ready at whatsoever time He may come.

They *wait* for their Lord, who remember at all times that they are but strangers and pilgrims on the earth, who meditate constantly upon God, and make His law their

Theophylact.

Jansen Yp.

Rev. xix. 7.

Dion. Carth.

Bruno
Astensis.
Quenel.

Acts i. 11.

Maldonatus.

Isa. xxx. 15.

Jansen Yp.

Faber Stap.

1 Thess. iv.
16.

Maldonatus.

¹ “ Dominus noster tunc ad nuptias revertetur, quando sponsam suam, matrem nostram, sanctam videlicet Ecclesiam, omni corruptione liberam castis complexibus in æternæ felicitatis thalamum introducet. Venit autem et nunc ad nuptias per singulos dies, quando sanctorum animas, quæ et ipsæ illius

sponsæ sunt, ad Se vocat, et Secum in æternæ beatitudinis cubiculum collocat [S. Gregorii Hom. xiii. in Evan.]. Quotidie igitur Salvator noster nuptias facit. Quotidie ad se venientibus sanctorum animabus delicias summi boni et ineffabiles dulcedinis epulas ministrat.”
—Bruno Astensis.

delight ; who keep ever in mind this truth, that *the night cometh when no man can work* ; who are inflamed by His love, and who, looking to Him, *the author and finisher of their faith*, endure with patience the sorrows and tribulations of this world, because their mind is set not on earthly but on heavenly things.¹

John ix. 4.

Heb. xii. 2.

Toletus.

Cyril.

When Christ comes from heaven, He comes as from a feast, for where God dwells is no sadness, but one long festival.

Matt. xxiv.
46.

(37) *Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh² shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.*

Dion. Carth.

Stella.

Dion. Ar.

Jansen Yp.
Augustine.

John xiii. 4.

Stier.

Olshausen.

Blessed now in hope, and hereafter in fruition shall these *servants* be. He, their Lord, will then *gird Himself*, show all care and diligence in His ministrations for His people, and will *make them to sit down* in perpetual rest. Then coming forth as of old in His first advent, when He came from the bosom of the Father, He will *serve them* with eternal happiness and give to them Himself, who is the joy and the food of the saints. As at the last meal before His crucifixion, He *girded Himself*, and served His disciples, so is He doing now ; He is always girding Himself for us ; always washing the feet of those who love and serve Him, as hereafter He will minister to us at that eternal banquet where all wants shall be satisfied, all desires fulfilled.

There are these four distinct promises made to those who *wait for their Lord*, and whom at His coming He finds ready to receive Him.

Matt. xx. 28.

(1) *He shall gird Himself* to do the proper work of His ministry, who came upon earth *to minister* to all our wants.

(2) He will *make them to sit down* in perfect peace and rest, free from all trials of earth.

(3) He will *come forth* to them, will show Himself to them,

¹ " Debemus confestim aperire mente consentiendo et affectu complectendo adventum Domini in domum Suam à se sanguine Suo comparatam. Dandum est ergo Illi advenienti cubiculum collecti animi, lectus pacis, sedes quietis, clavis cogitationis, cibus bonorum operum, vinum amoris, custodia timoris sancti : qui enim bene recipit Christum

in vita, clementer excipietur ab Eo in morte."—*Salmeron*.

² " Cum venerit dominus ipsorum non de Se, sed de eo qui à nuptiis rediturus erat, loquitur : ideoque nomen domini hoc loco majoribus literis non scribo. Quanquam per illum Ipse significatur."—*Maldonatus*.

and address Himself to every individual soul, coming to each as He gave Himself for every man.¹ Stella.

(4) He will *serve them*; He will no longer regard them, that is, as His servants merely, but He will treat them as His friends, and minister to them. Sylvira.

Christ will *gird Himself* to minister to those who now stand with their loins girded to minister to Him. As our life is, so will be our reward; for He gives to every man according to his works. But He will not only hereafter gird Himself, He is now girding Himself in guiding and strengthening us to the fulfilment of our duties in God's Church, and by ministering to us those consolations which come from His presence and indwelling. He it is who serves us by removing all hindrances from the way of those who walk after His commandments, and who is preparing a place for us in His kingdom of glory, by every preparation of our hearts for that kingdom.² Cyril.
Rev. xxii. 12.
Salmeron.

He came when at His first advent He showed Himself by means of the flesh which He took when He was born into the world. He comes when He inspires the hearts of men to serve Him, and to remember the account which they must all one day give to Him. He will come when He shall appear in judgment, and will make those who have loved and served Him here to be with Him in that glory which shall never end. Happy, then, are they who, living to God and for God in this world, shall sit for ever with their Incarnate Lord at the banquet in heaven, and live in God and with God for ever. Then shall be fulfilled the words uttered by the Evangelical prophet, *My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.* In no earthly habitation, in no resting-place of this Hugo de S.
Charu.
Quenel.
Isa. xxxii. 18.

¹ " *Transiens circumcursitando, dum ipsi; vel adveniens, παρελθών, præter expectationem, verbum illud eâ significatione sumitur apud Demosthenem.*" — *Lamy.* " *Παρελθών, sumptum est ex consuetudine ministrantium qui obire mensam et singulos convivas solent, ut videant quid desit cuiquam.*" — *Maldonatus.* " *He that serves at the table goes about while the guests sit.*" — *Gloss. in Baltera, fol. 57, 2.* " *Παρελθών seems to direct the same thing here; unless it may refer to some such thing as this, viz. that the master will pass by his dignity, and condescend to minister to his own servants.*" — *Lightfoot, Horæ Hebraicæ.*

² " *Præcinget Se ad ministerium*

illorum qui ad Suum fuerunt præcincti et ministrabit his qui bene Christo ministraverunt, plenitudinem consolationis et felicitatis suppeditans. Et quemadmodum hic de plenitudine lucis et gratiæ Christi omnes justî accipiunt; ita ibi de plenitudine beatitudinis et luminis gloriæ Ipsius. Præcinget etiam Se nos ipsos præcingendo et tollendo impedimenta corruptionis et mortalitatis nostræ carnis per resurrectionem Suam in spe. Faciet eos discumbere per ascensionem, parando eis locum. Et transiens. In servis suis transeuntibus à creaturis ad Creatorem ab humanitate ad divinitatem, à terrenis ad cœlestia." — *Salmeron.*

1 Cor. ii. 9.

world, but far above the homes of earth, and the purest joys of this world, for *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.*¹

Matt. xxiv.

42.
Luke xxi. 36.

(38) *And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.*

In this parable we are taught these several truths :—

(1) That the servants of God should watch like those true and faithful servants of man who wait anxiously and yet uncertainly when their lord shall come.

(2) That His servants should wait with joy for the coming of their Lord ; not trembling for fear of punishment, nor indifferent whether He will come or no.

Jans. Gand.

(3) That, whether He come in the hour when most men are buried in profound slumber, or earlier in the night, these servants of God should be ready, in order that they may at once open to Him, and go immediately into His presence.

Euthymius.

The time of the Lord's coming is spoken of as night, since that was the time when the wedding feast was usually given. Our present life is likened to night, since it is full of uncertainty and of error. *If He shall come* : the uncertainty of the time of His coming, as pointed out by this word *if*, is introduced to show the need of our never being off our guard, of our watching without ceasing.

Hofmeister.

Mariana.

The Jews are said to have divided the whole of the night into three watches. The Romans, however, made four watches of the night.² The difference seems to be rather verbal than real. But some say that there were four watches : three watches of the night and one of the morning.³ So is

¹ "Theophylactus premit verbum, quod cum dicit recumbere servos. 'Totos,' ait, 'per omnia quiescere facit: nam sicut, qui recumbit toto corpore quiescit ita in secundo adventu omnes sancti per omnia requiescent.' Cœlestis quies undique plena et perfecta, utpote æterna, et non ut mundana, quæ est dimidiata ac pertransiens."—*Sylveira*.

² "Erat apud antiquos nox distiuncta in quatuor partes, seu vigilias, singulæque tres horas continebant. Prima vigilia incipiebat noctis initio, tribus horis exactis succedebat secunda vigilia,

quæ media nocte finiebatur : à qua incipiebat tertia vigilia, durabatque per alias tres horas, post quas adveniebat quarta vigilia, perdurabat usque ad auroram, seu solis ortum."—*Sylveira*.

³ "The Jews made a division of the night into four parts, the three first of which they thought were properly the watches of the night, and the fourth was the morning. The first watch began at six o'clock in the evening and lasted till nine; the second began at nine and ended at twelve, which was midnight; the third began at twelve

the whole night of our life divided into watches, for the whole of our life is to be a time of watching: since as long as we are here we have active and watchful foes to contend against; we have to watch until the coming of our Lord, and await His appearing. Stella.

In this parable the first watch is not mentioned, since it is the time of the marriage feast itself. If the Lord is following the Roman computation, then the fourth watch is passed over, as this is the time and the hour of the dawn.¹ Bengel.

These words, like most of the parables of Christ, have their historical as well as their individual application, for the life of man is symbolized by that of the human race. Historically, then, the *first watch* is the period of the patriarchs, when He did not come in person. *The second watch* is the time of the Jewish Church, when His incarnation took place. *The third* is the time until the end of the world, during which the second coming, His advent to judge the quick and the dead, will take place.² As to the individual, the first watch is to him the time of childhood, and of this we read nothing, since before reason dawns we can give no account for our actions. Christ comes in judgment to the soul during the second or the third watch. *The second watch* is the time of mature life, as the *third* is that of old age, for any action during which watches we shall have to give a strict account.³ Bruno Ast.
Chrysologus.

If He shall come . . . in the third watch, when the silence and darkness are most profound, and when many who have watched through the earlier part of the night have grown supine because He seems to be delaying His coming, *blessed are those who are still watching*. It may be, as one suggests, that Christ here says nothing of the fourth watch because of the difficulty which those experience of turning to Him who have neglected His call in earlier life. Cyril.
Theophylact.

and closed at three; the fourth began at three and ended at six in the morning."—Gill.

¹ "Cur secundæ vigiliæ et tertię meminit, non primæ, non quartæ? An ut in similitudine à nuptiis desumptâ perseveraret. Non tam citò, nec tam serò redire à nuptiis mos erat; et ideo nec primæ mentio fit, nec quartæ vigiliæ."—Novarinus.

² "Tres vigiliæ, tria tempora sunt, ante legem et sub lege et sub gratia. Quoniam enim in prima vigilia, neque per legem, neque per prophetas mundum Dominus visitavit, ideo nihil hic de prima vigilia dicitur. In secunda autem

vigilia non solum per legem et prophetas, verum tamen per Se Ipsum mundum visitare dignatus est. Unde Apostolus ait, *Multifariam multisque modis olim Deus loquens patribus in prophetis, novissime diebus istis locutus est nobis in Filio* [Heb. i. 1]."—Bruno Astensis.

³ "Omissa prima vigilia infantium, qui baptizati si ante discretionis tempus obierint, salvantur meritis tantummodo passionis Domini quæ illis communicantur per sacramentum baptismi. Secunda vigilia incipit puerorum jam adultorum, juvenum et virorum ætas. In tertia senum vita desinit."—Soarez.

. "Emitte in eos, quæsumus, Domine, Spiritum sanctum, quos in opus ministerii Tui fideliter exequendi septiformis gratiæ Tuæ munere roborentur. Abundet in eis totius forma virtutis, auctoritas modesta, pudor constans, innocentiae puritas, et spiritualis observantia disciplinæ. In moribus eorum præcepta Tua fulgeant; ut suæ castitatis exemplo imitationem sanctam plebs acquirat; et bonum conscientiae

testimonium præferentes, in Christo firmi et stabiles perseverent; dignisque successibus de inferiori gradu per gratiam Tuam capere potiora mereantur. Per eundem Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium Tuum: qui Tecum vivit et regnat in unitate Spiritus Sancti Deus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen."—*De Ordinatione Diacon. in Missale.*

THE ORDERING OF PRIESTS.

ST. MATTHEW IX. 36—38.

(36) *When Jesus saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad¹ as sheep having no shepherd.²*

Mark vi. 34.
Luke x. 6.
Numb. xxvii.
17.
1 Kings xxii.
17.
Jer. l. 6.
Ezek. xxiv.
2.
Zech. x. 2.

THESE words of Christ seem to have been spoken about a month before the Feast of Passover, at which time the harvest commenced. The fields would then be whitening with grain, and when our Blessed Lord spoke of the coming harvest of His Church, the disciples had before their eyes nature's parable of the kingdom of grace. Multitudes had followed Him, marvelling at His miracles; eager to be healed of their diseases, even if not minded to be taught by His words; and now, when He saw them wearied so that they fainted by the way, *He was moved with compassion.*

Greswell.
Leigh.

Tostatus.

He came *healing every sickness and every disease among the people*,—a type of what He would do for those who were sick at heart because of the disease of sin. For the spiritual state of the Jewish people was but faintly imaged by the crowd of sick and diseased, of the halt and the blind, the

¹ ἦσαν ἐκλειυμένοι καὶ ἰρριμμένοι.
—*Text recept.* ἦσαν ἰσχυλμένοι καὶ ἰριμμένοι.—*Tisch.*

² “Ἐσχυλμένοι, ‘were harassed.’ This reading is substituted for ἐκλειυμένοι, ‘fainted,’ by Mill, Wetstein, Griesbach, Vater, Scholz, Lachmann, and most other critics; the common reading being generally regarded as a marginal gloss on ἰσχυλμένοι, which is here employed in a rather unusual sense. A formidable array of the best manuscripts is produced by Scholz to justify the change, whilst those that favour ἐκλειυμένοι are either of slight

value (such as Codex L, respecting which see note on chap. viii. 15; and Appendix A), or of recent date. The two words are so nearly synonymous that the testimony of versions should

be used with caution: but Syr. ܠܝܣܝܝܐ (‘lassi,’ Schaaf) seems best to correspond with ἐκλειυμένοι, while the Italic and Vulg. ‘vexati’ suggest ἰσχυλμένοι, which is also the reading of Chrysostom and other Fathers; and may fairly be considered as a genuine portion of the sacred text.”—*Scrivener's Notes on St. Matthew.*

dumb, the deaf, and the leper who crowded around Him to be cured of their infirmities. The terrible spiritual corruption and the neglect of the appointed shepherds of Israel were pictured before by the prophet: *Prophecy against the shepherds of Israel, prophecy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. This state it was which Christ looked upon; this it was which moved Him with compassion.*¹

Ezek. xxxiv.
2-6.

Luca Brug.

Corn. & Lap.

Paulus de
Palacio.

The figure of a sheep is that which is often used in Holy Scripture to describe mankind. It is an animal which more than any other needs the protection and guidance of a keeper. Since no animal, especially in such countries as Judæa, so easily falls a prey to the wolf, it is, therefore, the natural image of mankind, with its fatal facility of falling into the snare and under the dominion of the devil. And yet this image, true as it is, is but inadequate, as all earthly images are inadequate, to express the whole of the spiritual truth which our Lord would fasten upon our minds. Hence we have an additional image made use of. Men, in these few verses, are pictured at one time as *sheep*, at another as the *harvest*: erring as sheep, and yet hereafter to be garnered into the storehouse of God as the grain is laid up in the granaries of earth. And yet of the race of mankind, but more particularly the Jewish people, of whom our Lord is here especially speaking, He says, not they had no shepherd, but that they *were scattered abroad as sheep having no shep-*

¹ “Ἐσπλάγχνισθη. Σπλάγχνα is a word by which the LXX. render רַחֲמִים, *rachamim*—‘misericordia,’ Prov. xii. 10—which is connected with סָפַר, *senter*, whence probably the word σπλάγχνα was suggested to the LXX. Cf. Gen. xliii. 30; 1 Kings iii. 26; and see the excellent remarks of Vors-

tius, de Hebr. N. T., pp. 36, 37. This use of σπλάγχνιζομαι and σπλάγχνα is limited to the LXX. and N. T. It bespeaks connexion between them and separation from other compositions. Singular intimations of mercy may well have a language of their own.”—*Wordsworth*.

herd. Shepherds they had in abundance, but shepherds who only added to the sin of the people, and made them wander more than they would otherwise have wandered from the right way.¹

We have, then, in these words, two truths declared :—

(1) As it regards God, we are told that the cause which led Christ to come upon earth, to gather those together who *were scattered abroad*, was His compassion.

(2) As it regards man. He was weary and faint in spirit, and those who ought to have made one fold were divided by sin and *scattered abroad*. As it regarded the individual soul, man had *fainted* under his burden, and was weary through toil : as it regarded the flock which should have been united under the One Shepherd, it was *scattered*. Ferus.
Stier.

He was moved with compassion, seeing at the same time the bodily wants of mankind, and the spiritual needs of the whole race of Adam. This need, and not the prayers of those ready to perish, not the consciousness and distress of mankind because of sin, was the motive cause which led Christ to earth, as it is the motive cause which leads Him to draw near to us now. Thus does He show Himself *the Good Shepherd*, and not a hireling. He it was who saw from afar, from His seat of glory, the whole human race bowed down by the weight of sin, wandering in diverse ways, driven by Satan at his will, and vexed by the wiles and snares of the devil. The shepherds who should have ministered to the wants of the flock, and have led men beside the waters of comfort, guided them to their deeper undoing into the ways of sin. Then, beholding this ruin, *He was moved with compassion*, because there was no deliverer, and His own arm brought deliverance to the captives of sin. He came down, humbling Himself to our nature, and to *the form of a servant*, and became the Teacher, the Healer, the Shepherd of His people. Nor did His love end thus, for when again He ascended into heaven, *He gave gifts unto men*, and left prophets and teachers whom He bade to follow in His steps and be the shepherds of His flock. Jansen Yp.
John x. 11.
Itemigius.
Phil. 11. 7.
Eph. 1v. 8.
Rab. Maurus.

Men were tired, weary, and harassed with the burden of their sins and with their hard bondage to Satan ;² benumbed and unable to rise from the mire into which they had sunk ; tired out with the cares of life with which they had entangled themselves, and scattered by wolves as sheep without a Chrysostom.
Gorranus.
Gloss.
Olshausen.

¹ The people *fainted and were scattered abroad*. "The one by the vain and burdensome traditions, the other by the profligate neglect of their teachers." — *Keble*.

² " *Vexati à dæmonibus, item jacentes scilicet prostrati ab infirmitatibus. Vel vexati erroribus, jacentes peccatis, sicut oves non habentes pastorem.*" — *Th. Aquinas*.

shepherd, weary at once and scattered;¹ weary because no man regarded them in their misery; and *scattered* hither and thither by the false lights of their teachers, and neglected by those who should have guided them along the right way—the Scribes and Pharisees—who, seated in the chair of Moses, were wholly neglectful of their duty to those committed to their charge.

Euthymius.
Menochius.
Whitby.

Christ showed His compassion for those who *were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd*, by opening their hearts to the truth, and by removing their bodily diseases, that so He might lead them to seek from Him the healing of the soul. In all He thus did He has left us a picture of the true pastor, full of compassion for the sinners who are under his charge, and diligent in his labours in the harvest-field into which he has been called by God.²

Hugo de S.
Charo.

Quemel.

(37) *Then saith He unto His disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few.*³

Luke x. 2.
John iv. 35.
Acts xvi. 9,
10; xviii.
10.
2 Thess. iii. 1.
Matt. xiii. 38.
John xv. 1.

The field is the world, as Christ Himself has told us: God the Father *is the husbandman*, as we are assured by the same infallible authority; the Lord of the harvest is Christ the Eternal Son; the Apostles and other ministers of Christ are the *labourers*.⁴ But whilst the field of God's husbandry is the whole world, it is not the less true that every individual soul is equally the field to which God comes seeking precious fruit.

Alex. Nat.

The spiritual harvest is in Holy Scripture sometimes used of one, sometimes of the other of these two events:—

(1) It is the name given to that ingathering of fruits which is to take place at the time of the general judgment, as when the great householder is represented as answering the request of his servants to allow them to root up the

¹ “*Languissans, non seulement par les maladies corporelles, mais faute de pâture spirituelle, et par la corruption de leurs mœurs. Dispersez, par les schismes et les hérésies.*”—*Amelote*.

² “*Vexatio gregis et ovium atque barbarum, pastorum culpa et vitium magistrorum est.*”—*Jerome*.

³ “*Hoc est in multis antiquis libris, etiam apud Strabum, Hugonem, Lyranum, decimi capitis initium. Et quidem non absurde: hinc enim ejus sententia dependet. Redditur enim hoc loco causa missionis Apostolorum de qua agitur ibidem, nam propterea missi*

sunt, quia messis erat multa, operarii autem pauci. Messem vocat auditorum multitudinem, verbum Dei adventum audire. Exierat enim, qui seminat, id est, Christus Ipse, seminare semen suum: creverat feliciter semen et seges matura jam erat ad messem, propterea non jam semen, non segetem sed messem vocat.”—*Maldonatus*.

⁴ “*Ὁ μὲν θερισμὸς πολὺς. Ita sanè, et in Pirke Abboth. c. ii. a. 15; ubi R. Tarphon dicit, dies brevis est et opus multum et operarii pigri et merces multa et paterfamilias urget.*”—*Isaffius*.

tares by bidding them *Let both grow together until the harvest*; until the separation between the evil and the good, and the reception of the good into the eternal mansions prepared for them. Matt. xiii. 30.

(2) It is used for the period of the gathering of each individual soul into the earthly Church. This latter is what is here meant by the harvest which is so plenteous. Christ was about, through His Apostles and the first ministers of His Church, to call in and to gather many souls into the one fold, of which He is the Eternal Shepherd. Ferus.

The prophets and priests of the old dispensation had scattered the seeds which had since sprung up, and Christ the great *Sower* had Himself gone out to sow the seed of eternal life, as well by His teaching as by the effectual moving of the heart; by the daily sacrifice and service of the temple and by His dealing with individual souls in sorrow and affliction. In all these ways had the sowing been going on. He now commissions His Apostles, and those who should hereafter be sent forth to gather in the harvest which was even then whitening the fields. Thus does He proclaim the continuity of His grace, and join the old and the new dispensations together; the old as the preparation for the new, the new as the completion of the old. Few indeed were the labourers who could gather in. Until the commission of the Twelve, the great forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, and our Blessed Lord Himself were alone in this field. Then when He sent forth the Twelve He said, *Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.* Many, he says, are already disposed, ready to receive the Word of God, to bear fruit and to be gathered into the kingdom of God: ripe for the eternal harvest, because the Sun of Righteousness had arisen with heat and healing, had with His shining been ripening and preparing men for that harvest to gather in which He was about to send forth His labourers, and which was great and plenteous because it embraced as its field the whole world.¹ Matt. xiii. 3.
Emm. ab
Incarnat.
Gorranus.
Luca Brug.
Wordsworth.
Euthymius.
John iv. 35—
38.
Marianus,
Titelmann.
Menochius.
Paulus de
Palacio.

¹ “Super luxuriantes calamos ortus est Sol justitiæ Christus: tunc eum de virgine natus est. Ascendit sensim, radios suæ doctrinæ et amoris eis infundens. Hoc verò tempore quo messem albam esse dixit, ascenderat Sol ad

medium prædicationis suæ. Dignum-que erat ut calami, sole ita radiante, et humorem calamorum exsiccante jam alberent ad messem. Hoc ergo est quod dicit. Messis tempus est quantum est ex solis radiantis fervore. Jam

Cajetan.

The labourers are few. He says not preachers and priests are few; He says not that there was any deficiency in the number of the scribes and Pharisees, but emphatically He speaks of the fewness of the *labourers*. Many then, as now, had the office to guide and instruct and to minister in spiritual things for the people; *few* who laboured therein, and freely gave their strength and their powers to the work of bringing men to God.¹ For in *labourers* two things are needed—

(1) The knowledge how to labour; acquaintance with the duties of their ministry.²

1 Cor. iv. 2.
Ferus.

(2) Fidelity in the work to which they have been called; *for it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful*, that he be diligent and earnest in the duty of his stewardship.

We have here set before us the duty of God's ministers, and their obligation who are called to any office in His Church. They are to labour in the field of their ministry; to make ready, so far as in them lies, the harvest for the time of the great ingathering, and to collect together the sheaves for the granary of God. Those priests who slumber at their posts, who indulge themselves listlessly and seek their ease, or who employ their time and spend their thoughts and strength in other occupations, to the neglect of the work of their ministry, the preaching the Word, calling the careless and the sinner to repentance, comforting those who are afflicted, ministering to the sick, teaching the ignorant, and especially the young, are unworthy the name of God's pastors, are not *labourers* in that field into which they have been summoned.³ Patriarchs and prophets, priests and Levites, apostles and evangelists, have laboured in tilling that field, and in sowing the good seed; others have entered into their labours, and are called upon to show the like zeal and to labour with equal diligence. Let the ministers of God, under the dispensation of the Gospel, labour as becomes

albet messis quantum est ex gratia Evangelii."—*Paulus de Palacio*.

¹ "Ecce mundus sacerdotibus plenus est. Sed tamen in messe Dei rarus valde invenitur operator: quia officium quidem sacerdotale suscipimus; sed opus officii non implemus."—*Gregorius Mag. in Hom. xvii. in Lucam*.

² "Tam doctrina quam vita clarere debet Ecclesiasticus doctor. Nam doctrina sine vita arrogantem reddit, vita sine doctrina inutilem facit. Sacerdotis prædicatio operibus confirmanda est, ita ut quod docet verbo instruat ex-

emplo. Vera enim est illa doctrina quam vivendi sequitur forma."—*Iisdore*.

³ "Observandum non dicit, Pauci sunt doctores, prædicatores, sed Pauci operarii. Multi quidem erant apud Judæos doctores, sacerdotes sed pauci operarii. Non enim operarii omnes sunt qui sacerdotes, aut prædicatores, sunt quidem qui officia ipsa ambiunt, sed non ut operentur, sed ut otientur. Sunt alii qui operantur quidem sed mercenarii sunt, sua enim quæerunt."—*Ferus*.

the work which lies before them and the Lord whom they ought to serve, whose hired servants they are, unless they would be condemned at the last as idle and unprofitable servants. The harvest is indeed great; the work, but for the strength which God gives to His faithful servants, would be overwhelming: countless are the souls yet to be gathered in; many the infidels to be converted, and the unbelievers who are to be won from the hopelessness of their unbelief; great are the numbers of the heathen who are to be baptized; many the faithful to be encouraged, guided, and strengthened; and large, alas! the crowd of the fallen who await the ministry of Christ's true labourers, that they may be raised from the mire into which they have sunk. But the reward is great: the help that is promised is sure and sufficient. *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.* The call of Christ to every one of His ministers is this, *Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry;* and the encouragement to persevere is the conviction with which St. Paul strengthened himself, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.*

Nat. Alex.

Ps. cxxvi. 6,
7.

2 T.m. iv. 5.

2 Tim. iv. 8.

(38) *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth¹ labourers into His harvest.*

God would reward not only faithful work, but also those who desire and pray for the growth of His kingdom upon earth. He bids us therefore *pray* for additional *labourers* for His vineyard. In this is the great reason for and encouragement in praying at the Ember season for the supply of good and sufficient *labourers* in the harvest-field of God.

Bruno
Astensis.

Keble.

It has been asked why is it needful for us to pray for this blessing, since the compassion of our Almighty Father moves Him, who is love, to all acts of love and mercy. This involves the whole question of prayer, and, without going into this, it is sufficient to answer—

¹ “ἐκβάλλειν: *ejicere* invitos supra vii. 22 et viii. 12; *expromere* ibidem et *eximere* vii. 5 et xii. 35; sed et *emittere* et *ablegare volentes*, Joh. x. 4.”—*Klener*. “Verbum ἡ βάλλω varias non minus quam elegantes significationes admittit. . . . Hoc loco est *emitto*. Non puto

hic emphasin ullam quærendam, quasi operarii sint celeriter mittendi in opus Dei, vel etiam inviti et cunctantes extrudendi. Nil hic spectandum præterquam usus verbi qui planè vulgaris est.”—*J. F. Hombergk, Parerga Sacra*.

Gregory
Mag.
Dial. l.

(1) That God has so ordered, that what we need we should pray for. He gives us what we feel we want, when we ask for it. And though the harvest is God's, yet the benefit of being included amongst those who shall be gathered into God's eternal kingdom is man's, and must therefore be prayed for.

(2) He bids us pray in order that the gift may not be despised, and Christ teaches us in this particular how highly we are to estimate the blessing of faithful labourers in the field and vineyard of God.

Tostatus.

(3) It is a prayer less for ourselves than for others, and in it we pray that those whom God sends into His field should prove themselves not unworthy of their privilege and vocation, but should indeed be *labourers*.

Luca Brug.

(4) In bidding us, then, to *pray* He teaches us the source of the Church's strength, and tells us, so often as we see the flock languish, and good and faithful shepherds to be wanting, to *pray* to the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth those into His harvest-field who would feed His flock and prove themselves His true labourers by their diligence in His field.

Corn. & Lap.

(5) He gives us encouragement to seek aid in all perplexities and troubles of His Church, by telling us that He Himself is the Lord and Head of the Church.

Theophylact.

No sooner had He bidden them to *pray* for this blessing to the Lord of the harvest, than He showed Himself to be that Lord. He did not, as He directed His disciples to do, pray to His Father, as at other times we find Him doing, but He chose out and sent forth *labourers* into the world, the field, as one who, as Lord, had the right so to send.

Gorranus.

The harvest, then, is the ingathering of men into the Church, the conversion of those without, and their entrance into His fold: the *labourers*, the reapers, are the preachers and ministers of His Church, and the Lord of the harvest is Christ Himself—

Maldonatus.

(1) Since He is God, and all things done externally by any one person in the ever-blessed Trinity is the act of each and all.

Corn. & Lap.

(2) As man, since He has redeemed us by His blood from the power of Satan, and made us the children of God.

Stier.

That He will send. The word used (*ἐκβάλην*), though not necessarily confined to this, yet seems to imply a vehement impulse in the sender forth of these labourers.¹ That He

¹ "Hic apud hunc Evangelistam vehementius dictum est, *ut ejiciat operarios in messem*. Quid enim est dicere *ut ejiciat*, nisi quia libenter otiosi sunt,

etiam illorum quam plurimi quibus creditum est talentum operationis, et interdum quasi specie sanctitatis atque perfectionis volunt secretius vivere soli

would send them forth by arousing their consciences who are in the ministry, but who do not labour: that He would alarm those who let their talent lie buried in the earth, and awaken those who slumber in the midst of the work which they ought to do. That He will send men after His own heart—men imbued with His Spirit, and earnest in doing the will of Him who had sent them, as He Himself was—men girt about with charity and zeal, not those who seek wealth or influence for their own private ends, or are ambitious of station or of men's applause, but simply desirous of preaching the truth in love and in earnest for the extension of His kingdom. Rupertus.

We are bidden, moreover, to pray that those who are sent forth should be labourers. In this there are three things implied:—

(1) On the part of God, that He would by His authority send forth those who should teach and minister in His Church, since He is Himself the great shepherd of the sheep.¹

(2) On the part of those who are sent—His ministers—that they should be competent to the work in the field, and after being sent forth that they should labour in the way which He requires of them.

(3) With respect to the work to which they are called—the harvest-field of God—there are they to labour. It is not enough that they are active, are employed, unless they are employed for Him, in the work which He has set them to do, and in the sphere allotted to them. All other activity in His servants is but idleness, it is not their work. In other words, of every true harvest reaper it is necessary that he should be skilful in his work, industrious, that he should have been sent, and should labour when he is sent. Gorranus.

In these words Christ teaches us at all times to pray for others: not that He is moved to compassion by our prayers, for He compassionates us when most we forget Him. He would have us, however, pray as well as teach. Those whom He was about to send forth as *labourers* into the Leigh.

sibimetipsis, cum prodesse possint et aliis? Ejiciat Dominus qui ejusmodi sunt, scilicet, conveniendo conscientias eorum et redarguendo qui damnose abscondant talentum sibi creditum. Ejiciat, inquam, ut operentur, quia revera est ejici optatam quietem relinquere præ timore Domini.”—*Rupertus*.

¹ “Inter Christianos unicus est pastor. Licet multi prælati sint, in his tamen unus est qui nos pascit, Christus.

Sicut enim in Paulo et reliquis prædicatoribus unus est qui loquitur, Christus [1 Cor. i. 13]; ita idem est qui nos pascit in pastoribus multis. Ut igitur in lege veteri multi erant sacerdotes, in nova verò unus est in multis (ut Paulus contendit in Epistola ad Hebræos, vii. 23, 24), ita et unus nobis est pastor in multis.”—*Paulus de Palacio*.

Euthymius.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

harvest-field of God He exhorts to pray, working diligently for the glory of God and the good of our fellow-men, and praying that we and all others who work for God and are sent forth by Him, should prove ourselves faithful and wise servants, true *labourers* in His vineyard and field, the world.¹

¹ See the Commentary on the Gospel for St. Luke's Day, pp. 461—474.

••• “O God, mighty in power, unsearchable in wisdom, wonderful in counsel beyond the sons of men; do Thou, O Lord, fill this Thy servant to whom Thou hast vouchsafed admission into the grade of a presbyter, with the gifts of the Holy Spirit: that he may be worthy to stand unblameable at Thy altar, to preach the Gospel of Thy kingdom, to minister the word of Thy truth, to offer to Thee gifts and spiritual

sacrifices, to renew Thy prayer by the laver of regeneration: that so when he appears at the second coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ Thy only-begotten Son, he may receive the reward of a faithful administration of his office, through the abundance of Thy mercy. For blessed and glorious is Thy honoured and adorable name. Amen.”—*Prayer in Greek Ordination Service.*

ORDAINING OR CONSECRATING OF AN ARCHBISHOP OR BISHOP.

ST. JOHN XXI. 15—17.

(15) *Jesus saith to Simon Peter,¹ Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me (ἀγαπᾷς με) more than these? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee (σὺ οἶδας ὅτι φιλῶ σε).² He saith unto him, Feed My lambs.*

THE frequency of the acts of love and of power manifested by our Blessed Lord, which are recorded to have taken place after He had eaten with His disciples, is noteworthy. We are by this reminded of that which was made a charge and reproach against Him during His incarnate life, that He *came eating and drinking*. The Holy Eucharist itself was instituted *after supper*: after He had for the last time joined with His disciples in the Paschal Supper of the Jews. The first announcement to His Apostles that He would rise again from the dead—on which truth the whole Christian faith is based, for without this the *preaching* of the Church and the *faith* of its members are alike *vain*—was made after the supper at Bethany. It was when He had eaten *before them*

Matt. xli. 19.

1 Cor. xv. 14.

John xli. 2.

¹ “Peter had been called to the ministry by Jesus after a miraculous draught of fishes; it is after a similar draught that the ministry is restored to him.” —*Godet*. He had denied his Lord by the side of “a fire of coals,” and here the fire of coals must have reminded him of his fall, and made him feel the greatness of his Master’s love in his forgiveness.

² “Ἀγαπάω pluribus modis accipitur. Significat *amo, diligo*, Luc. vii. 42, Τίς οὖν αὐτῶν πλεῖον αὐτὸν ἀγαπήσει; 2 Cor. xi. 11, Ὅτι οὐκ ἀγαπῶ

ὑμᾶς; Ut autem apud Latinos inter *diligo* et *amo* (quorum hoc plus illo valere putatur vulgò) non semper observatur differentia: ita nec apud Græcos inter ἀγαπάω et φιλέω. Patet hoc ex hoc ipso capite ubi Christus Petrum interrogat, Ἀγαπᾷς με πλεῖον τούτων; Petrus verò respondet, Ναί, Κύριε· σὺ οἶδας ὅτι φιλῶ σε. Idem habetur ver. 16. Quin et Ipse Christus tertia vice interrogat, ver. 17, Φιλεῖς με; ubi similiter respondet, Σὺ γινώσκεις ὅτι φιλῶ σε.” —*Eras. Schmidt*.

Matt. xxvi.
12.
Luke xlv.
41.
John xx. 22.

Maldonatus.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

1 Semica.

Ferus.

1 Tim. v. 2.
Th. Aquinas.

that *He breathed on His Apostles* and gave them power for the ministry of His Church. Here we are told, that it was *when they had dined* that Christ spake these words to Peter, as though He would first remove all fear from his mind by eating with him, and would by the same act certify him and the rest of the Apostles of the truth of His resurrection, and of the reality of the body with which He had risen, by this act of familiar intercourse.¹

Almost all commentators, all indeed of any authority, understand by the question asked by Christ, *Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?* that a reference was made to the three denials of Christ which had marked the fall of Peter; and by the injunction *Feed My lambs* and *Feed My sheep*, our Lord's solemn and public declaration of the forgiveness of one who, being entrusted with the ministry of the flock of Christ, had so grievously sinned. For as his fall was public, so was the forgiveness of his Master public, and it was certified to his fellow-Apostles by the demand for the confession of Peter's love, and then by the charge which Christ upon this gave to him. His Master does not call His Apostle by the name of Peter; he is not reminded of his privilege in being built upon the Rock Christ Jesus, but He calls him *Simon, son of Jonas*, as though He would point to his weakness as man, to the yielding of nature rather than to the strength which only comes by grace.

These questionings of Christ teach a lesson to all whose duty it is to ordain and send men into the vineyard of Christ, and this seems the reason why they are chosen for the Gospel on the occasion of consecrating a bishop. Christ in His repeated question addressed to St. Peter gives an example of the diligence to be observed by bishops in selecting those who are to be ordained to any office and administration in the Church of Christ,² and affords an illustration of what is meant by the Apostolic injunction, *Lay hands suddenly on no man.*

Lovest thou Me more than these do? Our Lord does not ask this of His Apostle as though He knew not what was within his heart, but in order that He might draw from him the confession of his love and confidence. *Lovest thou Me*

¹ "A refectione non minus quam ante tradit tractatque Jesus diviniissima mysteria, non hic solum, sed et alibi: quia refectio corporis moderata non inidoneos redderat discipulos ad excipienda spiritualia." — *Luca Brugensis*. "Volebat nimirum Dominus Suo exemplo commonefacere, ut sic coenam

sive prandium capiamus, ut cibo suscepto non minus ad exercitia spiritualia idonei simus, quam si impransi aut incœnati essemus." — *Maldonatus*.

² "Pastorale officium injungit, examinatione præmissa: et ideo qui ad hoc officium assumuntur primo examinantur." — *Th. Aquinas*.

more than these? was the natural interrogation of Christ. Since Peter had sinned beyond the rest of his fellow-Apostles by his denial of his Master, and had been forgiven in a larger measure than they had, and since to whom much is forgiven shall much be required, whilst *to whom little is given, the same loveth little*, so should he needs love *more than these*. There may, indeed, be here a reference to that presumptuous spirit of which there were frequent traces before the fall of Peter. *Though all men—that is, all these men especially—should be offended, yet will I never be offended. . . . Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.* Here however Peter, speaking with a humbling sense of his weakness and the remembrance of his fall, does not venture, as before, to place himself above the rest of his fellow-Apostles, but, passing by the reference to the rest, and not daring to rely upon his own convictions, asserts only the fulness of Christ's knowledge, and declares, *Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee:*¹ Lord, I know not the heart of these; I boast no more of my own knowledge nor of my own strength; I say not now that I love thee more than these, but this I confess to Thee, who alone knowest all things, and who hast shown such love to me, and knowest that *I love Thee.*²

Luke vii. 47.
Lampe.

Matt. xxvi.
23, 25.

Theophylact.

Th. Aquinas.
Gulliaud.

He saith unto him, Feed My lambs. The words *lambs* and *sheep* are often used as convertible names; the distinction, however, which is made in these verses between these two words forbids us so taking them here. By *lambs*, the young, the newly converted, the weaker members of the flock of Christ seem to be indicated. *Feed*—including all care, diligence, solicitude, and labour for the good of the flock.³ *My lambs*—those who were given to Me by the Father, those for whom I died, for whom My blood was shed, whom

Menochius.

Mariana.

¹ "Petrus prius in peccatum ceciderat; nec idoneus erat ut præferretur, nisi prius ejus culpa aboleretur, quod non fit nisi per caritatem. Caritas operit multitudinem peccatorum."—Th. Aquinas.

² "Domine, tu scis, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee; my love to Thee is but the effect of Thy love to me, and therefore, Lord, continue Thine, that mine may continue."—Donne, Serm. liv.

³ "Pascere est regere ac gubernare; sed ita regere tanquam pastorem gregem, nemo nescit: et alibi sæpe docuimus, Hebræorum idioma est: Qui regis Israel intende, Hebr. est רעה, rohhah, qui

pascis, et, Elegit eum de gregibus ovium de post fastantes accepit eum, pascere Jacob servum suam, et Israel hæreditatem suam. Verbum רעה, rohhah, et participium רועה, robhhah, regere et gubernare et pastorem et gubernatorem in Scriptura significare est notissimum, cujus rei illustrissimum exemplum est hoc, רעים פלגרי יהיה איתכם ונתתי לכם (Jer. iii. 15), Et dabo vobis pastores secundum cor Meum, et pascent vos scientia et intellectu (noster, Et dabo vobis pastores juxta cor Meum, et pascent vos scientia et doctrina), loquitur de Ecclesiæ rectoribus et moderatoribus propheta."—Maldonatus.

Forus. I have redeemed so that they are now My possession, and over whom I show My authority by giving to thee this office, the oversight of My flock. And not only His authority, for the word *lambs* reminds us of His exceeding tenderness and love; a tenderness and love which He requires in all who under Him are the shepherds of His flock.¹ How entirely Peter was conformed to the will of Christ and remembered these words of his Master, may be gathered from his own words afterwards. Full of his old zeal, but untainted by his old presumption, he exhorts the ministers, who himself was a chief minister and elder, to *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

**1 Peter v.
2-4.**

Ammonius.

Lovest thou Me? As Peter had sinned by a presumptuous spirit and by boastful words, so now by his words, by the confession of his lips, does Christ seal his forgiveness.

Gorranus.

Lovest thou Me, and if thou lovest Me *feed My lambs*, is the exhortation which Christ gives every minister of His Church, for to none does He commit the care of His flock, save to those who love Him. If indeed thou lovest Me, is His call, think not of thine own advantage, bestow not thy thought and anxiety upon the feeding of thyself, but strive how best to *feed My lambs*:² seek not thine own glory, but Mine. All sins take their rise from selfishness; men who are *lovers of their own selves* fall into many sins, and become *covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce; despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.* Those, however, who love God are called upon to show forth that love by what they do for God. In this way does the minister of Christ prove his love to his Master, by loving those over whom Christ has placed him, and for whose souls he must watch *as those who must give account.*³

Alex. Nat.

**2 Tim. iii.
2-4.**

**Jans. Gand.
Heb. xiii. 17.**

¹ "In the Gospel Christ's charge to Peter was not to feed His sheep only, but His lambs also; and His lambs in the first place, because the increase of the flock depends chiefly upon the forwardness and thriving of the lambs; for they being well fed and looked to, less pains will be taken with them when they come to be sheep." — *Bp. Andrews.*

² "*Agnos meos, id est fideles meos, à me Agno agnos vocatos.*" — *Th. Aquinas.*

³ "Non otiosè toties repetitum est, *Petre, amas Me*, in commissione ovium. Et ego quidem id significatum perinde puto ac si illi dixisset Jesus: Nisi testimonium tibi perhibente conscientia quòd Me ames, et valde perfectèque ames, hoc est plusquam tua, plusquam

The end of all ministerial labour is the glory of God, which he cannot aim at who loves not God. Hence Christ here asks St. Peter nothing of his learning, nothing of his station in life, but solely of his love—*Lovest thou Me?* The failure in this respect makes men fall away as Peter did. As the true priesthood of Aaron was evidenced in this, that his rod alone budded and blossomed and yielded almonds, so do we evidence the reality of our ministry and of our call from God by a fruitful love, a love which is shown not merely by the blossoms of teaching, but by the fruit of a holy life. For Christ ever demands this of those who love Him, that they should labour also for Him. These two are inseparable. Though there are who say they love and care not to labour, yet none truly love Him but desire to labour in His cause.

Lampe.

Numb. xvii.
8.

Ferus.

Augustine.

Corn. & Lap.

See, servant of God, that thou love Him more than thou lovest thine own possessions, thine own fellow, thine own self.

Bernard.

(16) *He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith unto him, Feed My sheep.*

The greatness of the charge and the importance of the ministry to which St. Peter was called is shown in the repetition of this injunction of Christ, *He saith to him again the second time*; and yet, in repeating the injunction, it is no longer of the lambs of the flock of whom Christ speaks, nor does He merely say, *Feed My sheep*; not merely the young and tender, but the older and more mature members of the fold of Christ.¹ The word used (*ποιμαίνε*, not *βόσκε*, as before) is a more comprehensive word, meaning feed and direct, guide and watch over. As He no longer speaks of the young of the flock who need to be fed as a nurse feeds her infant charge, so He uses a word more applicable to the adult and stronger members of His flock.²

Hugo de S.
Claro.Th. Aquinas.
Ferus.

tuos, plusquam etiam te, ut hujus repetitionis Meæ numerus impleatur, nequaquam suscipias curam hanc, nec te intromittas de ovibus Meis, pro quibus sanguis utique Meus effusus est.” — *Bernard in Cant. Serm. lxxvi. § 8.*

¹ “In Ecclesia sunt tria genera hominum, scilicet incipientium, proficientium, et perfectorum, et primi quidem duo sunt agni, quasi adhuc imperfecti; alii autem sicut perfecti dicuntur

oves.” — *Th. Aquinas.*

² “‘Tend my sheep’ is perhaps better than ‘Feed my sheep,’ as in the Authorized Version, or ‘Keep my sheep,’ as in the Revised Version by Five Clergymen. ‘Keep’ is *τηρεῖν* and *φυλάσσειν*; but *ποιμαίνειν*, the work of the *ποιμήν*, is rather to ‘tend.’ This term, however, fails to render the care and watchfulness of *ποιμαίνειν*.” — *Malan’s Notes on St. John.*

Christ by these words, however, makes not Peter a ruler. He does not commit to him the flock as to a prince : he is but the feeder, the shepherd of the sheep. There is no promise of any advantage to be drawn by him from the flock committed to his charge. Nothing is said of the milk nor of the wool ; but for Christ's sake, and because he had confessed his love for Christ, he was bidden to tend, to care for the flock. *Feed*, not slay, is the injunction to the shepherd whom Christ chooses ; strengthen, not destroy ; be to the flock a pastor, not a wolf.¹

Theophylact.

Here also is to be noted the change which had come over Peter. His strength and confidence is no longer in his own zeal and devotion. It centres no longer in self, but in Christ, who knows the heart and sees at once the strength and the weakness of His servants. *Yea, Lord ; Thou knowest that I love Thee.*

Quesnel.

(17) *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me ? Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me ? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep.*

Thrice did our Blessed Lord ask this of Peter, in order that by his triple confession of his love for his Master he should be reminded of the three denials of Christ in the hall of Pilate, and that his Lord might convey the assurance of pardon to the soul of His penitent Apostle.² In this way Peter seems to have regarded the question thrice asked. He was *grieved* at the doubt which seemed to have been implied by the repetition of the question, as though his Lord questioned the sincerity of his love to Him. He was *grieved* also, it may be, at the recollection of his recent fall. That Peter did not understand this triple questioning and the triple command *feed My sheep* as conveying to him any prerogative in God's Church, as in comparatively modern times has been asserted, is seen in this, that he *was grieved*, which would not have been the case if these words mean, I

Alex. Nat.

Hugo de S.
Charo.
Olshausen.

¹ "Pasce verbo, pasce oratione, pasce exemplo," ait S. Bernard. Ideo Christus ter Petro dixit: *Pasce*. Sic Pa. xx. 1. *Dominus regit me* ; Heb. *Pascit me* meminerint ergo Episcopi et Pastores, ipsorum regimen esse pastum, regere esse pascere, non se, sed oves.

—Corn. à Lapidè in *Act.* xx. 28.

² "Exigitur trina confessio, ne minus amorì lingua serviat quam timori, et plus vocis eliciuisse videatur mors imminens quam vita præsens."—*Augustine*.

give to you the supreme authority in My Church. That Peter was in some sense the representative of the Apostolic body, and treated as the mouthpiece of the rest—in other words, that the primacy in order belongs to him—is clear from all the circumstances of his life: more than this he certainly did not possess.¹ The triple question then implied:—

Semler.

Hugo de S.
Charo.

(1) In the case of St. Peter himself, a reference to those three denials which Christ had foretold when He said, *The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied Me thrice.*

John xiii. 38.

(2) In the case of all who are called to bear office in the Church; the greatness of the work required from the minister of Christ, love toward God, which must engross all the heart, and mind, and strength; the intellect, the affections, and the will of man. It was the call to Peter and to all who serve in God's Church to minister before Him with a pure heart, with a quiet conscience, and with an unfeigned faith.²

Ferus.

Bernard.

In most of the old versions of the Scriptures there is a distinction made between the *sheep* of the preceding verse and the *sheep* of the present. This distinction it is not always possible to render in a translation, and the older versions are not themselves consistent in the way in which the distinction is marked. It is, however, marked: *lambs* (ἀρνία), *sheep* (πρόβατα), and *sheep* (προβατία) is a common reading; and no doubt some such distinction should be made. What Christ assigned to Peter was not likely to be given by a repetition of the same word. In some way we may well believe there was a distinction which applies to different states and conditions. By the *lambs* may have been meant the young, or the weak in faith, the new converts; by the *sheep*, in the second verse, the mature Christian. The *sheep* in the last verse are probably either the aged

¹ "His verbis, *Pasce agnos Meos, pasce oves Meas*, intelligimus Christum constituisse Petrum supremum Ecclesiæ pastorem, non tamen dominum. Nec constituit pastorem nisi ut pascat, tueatur, et servet oves suæ fidei concreditas, et non ut mactet, deglubat, aut perdat." —*Jo. Arboreus*.

² "Memento voci tuæ dare vocem virtutis. Quid illud inquis? Ut opera tua verbis concinant, imò verba operibus, ut cures videlicet prius facere quam docere. . . Sermo quidem vivus et efficax exemplum est operis, facile faciens suadibile quod dicitur, dum

monstrat factibile quod suadetur. Ergo in his duobus mandatis, verbi scilicet atque exempli, summam tui officii ad conscientiæ securitatem pendere intellige. Tu tamen si sapis, junges et tertium; studium videlicet orationis, ad complementum utique trinæ illius repetitionis in Evangelio de pascendis ovibus. In hoc noveris illius trinitatis sacramentum in nullo frustratum à te, si pascas verbo, pascas exemplo, pascas et sanctarum fructu orationum. Manent itaque tria hæc; verbum, exemplum, oratio: autem maxima . . . horum est oratio." —*S. Bernard, Epist. cci.*

members of the flock or the elders in station, the ministers under the bishop of the Church.¹

Christ by this third question to His Apostle shows to all of us the need of a searching and honest examination as to our motives for entering into the ministry of His Church: the need and the duty, therefore, which the rulers of the Church have of examining carefully all those who seek the power to minister to and to feed the flock of Christ by word, by example of life, and by active ministrations of love.²

Guillaud.

Faber Stap.

Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee. These are not, as before, mere assertions of a strength and resolution which will stand unmoved amidst temptation. Peter no longer asserts that he can never fall away from that love for Christ which he now possesses. He in his humility only makes the declaration of his love, and appeals to his Master for a confirmation of his words.

Theophylact.

By His resurrection from the dead Christ overcame death and removed from all those who love Him the fear of that death by which all must pass into life. Hence at this time He questions Peter not about his fear of death, He does not ask him as to his willingness to lay down his life for His sake, but He speaks of the love which He should have for the living, the Lord of Life—*Lovest thou Me?* And the power and the blessing of that Resurrection, in which all share, is shown in the loss of his self-confidence, and in the strength of the Apostle's confidence in his Lord as evidenced by his threefold confession of the truth, and by the triple testimony of his love for his Master.³ For this confession

Augustine.

¹ "Most of the old versions render the second *πρόβατα* (that in ver. 17) differently from the first; but the several ideas attached in different countries to 'sheep,' 'ewe,' 'ram,' as well as *ovis* being fem.—rarely mas.—make a correct reading of our Lord's words to Peter rather difficult. See De Ordine Syror. Maron. in Codex Lit. Eccl. Univ. ii. p. 10, 162."—*Malan's Notes on the Gospel of St. John.*

² "Quæstio est quare dicit ei *ter Pasce*: et respondetur quod oves Christi tripliciter debent pasci, scilicet verbo, exemplo, et temporali subsidio. Unde Beda: 'Solicitude pastoralis officii exigit ut rector Ecclesiæ, ne plebi temporalia desint, subsidia diligenter provideat, et eidem exempla virtutum ostendat, eique verba prædicationis sollicitus impendat.'"—*Gorranus.*

³ "Christus unum interrogat, volens unius voce summæ erga Se charitatis professionem cedi, ut per unum cæteri cognoscerent quales ad pastoricium regimen accedere debeant. Quo igitur indivulsius tenaciusque animis eorum qui gregi Dominico præficiendi sunt præcipua erga Jesum (qui pro grege commisso mortem oppetiit) adhæreat charitas, facta est hæc inquisitio dilectionis. Acceptionem enim ministrorum præcedere debet inquisitio dilectionis erga Christum, seu verbum, *Simon Joannis, diliges Me plus quam hi Me diligunt?* Quæstio est de ardentiore et majore erga Dominum charitate. Nam quum majorem Dei clementiam Petrus in se fuisset expertus, jure optimo majori amore affici debebat, et cui multa remittuntur, multum diligit."—*Guillaud.*

of Peter is the perfect declaration of Christ's Divinity, as well as the assertion of his own love for his Master. *Thou knowest all things* can only be said of Him who is Lord of all, and who therefore as Lord of the spirits of mankind knows the thoughts and hearts of every man. Faber Stap.

. "Amas Me, fili? *Pasce oves Meas.* Pascendo amorem exhibebis; et diligentibus Me omnia cooperantur in bonum, ipsa pericula ipsique hostes. *Pasce oves Meas.* Pascendo amabis; amando proficies, et fies perfectus.

Pasce oves Meas. Pascendo imitaberis Pastorem bonum, Jesum Filium Meum. Illi vero sunt perfecti et prædestinati, quos præcivi conformes fieri imaginis Ejus." — *Mem. Vitæ Sacerdotalis à Arvisenet.*

ORDAINING OR CONSECRATING OF AN ARCHBISHOP OR BISHOP.

(*Another Gospel.*)

ST. MATT. XXVIII. 18—20.

(18) *Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.*

SEVERAL commentators of eminence suppose that these words were spoken to the Eleven at the last appearing of Christ to His disciples, and just before He ascended in their presence into heaven. Others, however, enumerate this event amongst the frequent appearances of our Lord which took place in the forty days' interval between His resurrection and ascension, and many eminent commentators conjecture that it is the same as that which is mentioned by St. Paul when, as he tells us, our Blessed Lord *was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.*¹ If this be so, He probably appeared first to the whole multitude of His disciples, and then drew near to and conferred more particularly with the eleven Apostles. Be this as it may, this

Theophylact.
Maldonatus.
1 Cor. xv. 6.
Townson.

¹ "In the four Evangelists we find in all ten distinct appearances of our Lord after His resurrection. 1. At the sepulchre to the women. 2. To the same women on their way back from the sepulchre. 3. To Peter. 4. To two disciples as they went into the country. 5. To many together in Jerusalem Thomas not being present. 6. When Thomas was with the rest of the apostles. 7. At the Sea of Tiberias. 8. At the mountain in Galilee, according to Matthew. 9. To the Eleven

as they sat at meat, because they should not again eat with Him upon earth, related by Mark. 10. On the day of His ascension, no longer on the earth, but raised aloft in a cloud, as related by both Mark and Luke. But all is not written, as John confesses, for He had much conversation with them during forty days before His ascension, *being seen of them, and speaking unto them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*"—*Augustine in Catena Aurea* (Eng. edit.).

coming of Christ was probably not the last of the appearances of our risen Lord before His ascension.¹ Augustine.

He *came*. Striking is the difference between the manner of Christ's intercourse with His disciples before His crucifixion and resurrection, and that which He maintained with them afterwards. Before, He held familiar conversation with them, He went in and out with them: they abode with Him, and He with them. They knew where He was to be found when He withdrew Himself for prayer and communion with His Father. But after His resurrection, and for the whole time until He *ascended* unto His Father in the presence of them all, we read nothing of His dwelling with them, but all the incidents recorded of His intercourse with them tell us plainly that He had ceased to be with them as before. When they were assembled He came suddenly to them, and was in their midst they knew not how. To the two journeying to Emmaus He joined Himself, *and went with them*. To the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, whilst fishing, He *showed Himself*. Christ seemed in all this to be gradually preparing His disciples for His entire withdrawal from them as to a bodily presence, and to be preparing them to realize more fully the truth of His nearness to them at all times, though *their eyes were holden, that they should not know* the fact of His spiritual presence amongst them. John xx. 17.

Jesus came to His Apostles in body and in spirit also, consoling them by His visible presence, and comforting their hearts by the truth of which He had assured them, drawing near to them spiritually, and so enabling them in spirit to draw near to Him. He *came* near to remove all doubts from their minds as to the reality of His resurrection, and in order that He might teach them more fully as to their conduct after His ascension. He *came*, that He might encourage them for ever by the remembrance of His tenderness towards them whilst living with them, and of His power to aid them. When He proclaimed Himself Almighty, one in John xx. 19, 28.
Luke xxiv. 15.
John xxi. 1.
Luke xxiv. 16.
Salmeron.
Hugo de S. Charo.
Dion. Carth.

¹ "Though St. Matthew speaks only of the Eleven as present at this appearance of Christ, it is judged by the learned in general to have been that which is mentioned by St. Paul: *After that He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once* [1 Cor. xv. 6]. Five hundred brethren from different parts of Palestine would afford most of the Jewish inhabitants an opportunity of knowing the truth from some of the eye-witnesses, if they were desirous of inquiring into it, and must quickly

spread the fame of such an event throughout the whole country. St. Matthew's words, again, *But some doubted*, . . . showing that although he mentions only the Eleven, he supposes others to have been with them on this occasion: for before this time every one of the Apostles was perfectly satisfied, and those who doubted must have been others of His disciples." — *Townson's Works*, vol. ii. pp. 166, 167.

Sylveira.

whose hands *all power was in heaven and earth*, He at the same moment showed Himself their friend and brother, by coming in bodily presence to them.¹

Three things were on this occasion assured to His disciples by their Lord:—

(1) That He is the source of *all power* upon earth, as well as in heaven.

(2) That He it is who sends forth His ministers to serve in His Church. *Go ye therefore* because of this power. And that their office is to teach and to baptize by virtue of that power which He possesses.

Th. Aquinas.

(3) That those whom He sends He will sustain by His presence *unto the end of the world*.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.
Maldonatus.

All power, that is, all authority; and here, specifically, all authority to govern and direct His Church, and to strengthen His Apostles in discipling all nations, with which power He was now about to invest them. Though, He seems to say, I have been among you as one of yourselves, man in all man's trials and weaknesses; though I have not exerted that power which I have always preserved, and which would at any moment have sufficed to summon *more than twelve legions of angels* to My deliverance: yet now I assume that power which is inherent in My nature, the *power* to direct and control every creature *in heaven and in earth*; now I show myself King of kings and Lord of lords, in whom abideth the fulness of power—not power such as is possessed by the kings of earth, a limited power over a limited portion of the earth, but *all power both in heaven and in earth*.

Matt. xxvi.
53.
Eras.
Schmidt.
Dion. Carth.

Sylveira.

Corn. & Lap.

Heb. i. 6, 7.

Ephes. iv. 8.

Hardouin.

John xvii. 2.

Stier.
Matt. viii. 27.

Ps. cxlviii. 8.

All power is given unto Me—to Him alone, that is, as His sole prerogative: *unto Me*. *In heaven*—over all angels, so that they are all His ministers, and all worship Him: *in heaven*—so that from that throne to which He was about to ascend, and where He now sits, He may enrich us with all spiritual blessings, may give all that we can ask, and may defend and protect all who trust in Him. *In earth*—over all flesh, to give life to all; over all sinners, to save all who come to Him; over nature and the material forces of the world, to make them serve His redeemed ones—all the creatures of His hand; for *even the winds and the sea obey Him* now as thoroughly as during the time of His abode on earth, and still *fire and hail, snow and vapours, wind and storm*, fulfil *His word*.

¹ “O quantum distat meus Jesus à conditione aliorum hominum! Jesus, cum de Se publicat supremam potestatem, amicè ac familiariter accedit; homines verò, cum in se agnoscunt

aliquod dominationis vestigium, ita inflantur ac elewantur ut cum aliis loqui ac habere sermonem dedignentur.”—*Sylveira*.

When, and in what way, was this power given?—

(1) He possessed *all power* as God. *All power* was given to Him by His eternal generation, by His being begotten by the Source of all power, for the communication of the Divine essence was the communication of *all power*, and of every Divine attribute in its perfection.¹

Dion. Carth.
Maldonatus.
Sylveira.

(2) He possessed *all power* as man, and this seems to be the power especially referred to by our Blessed Lord at this time, power *given* to His manhood, so that it may flow over to and enrich us, and may give to our wills the power of embracing and obeying Him; and this He—the God-Man Christ Jesus—had, by virtue of the hypostatic union of the nature of man with the person of the Eternal Word, so that Christ, God and man, preserved that power, though man, which He ever had as God. And this power He had (*a*) in the beginning, from the moment of His conception by the Holy Spirit, so that His human nature, by a power inherent in it through union with the Divine nature, worked miracles. This was the gift of His humiliation; (*β*) manifestly, and in its completeness, after His resurrection, for though possessed from His birth into the world, it was not exercised, at least in its fulness, until after His resurrection from the dead. Hence it is that at this time when He had overcome death by submission, and had triumphed over it by His glorious resurrection, that He fully proclaimed this possession of *all power*.²

Rab. Maurus.
Athanasius.
Theophylact.

Sylveira.
Euthymius.

Dion. Carth.
Barradius.

Corn. & La .

Alex. Nat.

Jans. Gand.

And yet, though the power which Christ possessed was not new as to its substance—for as God this He always had—it was new—

(1) As to its mode or form. It was a power possessed not because He made all things, but because He had humbled Himself to the form of a servant, and to the death of the cross.

Gen. i.
passim.
John i. 3.
Phil. ii. 8—
10.

(2) With reference to the state of those over whom the power is exercised. It is not merely the creatures of His hand, but those who had been redeemed by His bloodshedding: those who share with Him in the power of His resurrection, and have an immortal possession through their

¹ “Sicut, jubente Pharaone, in tota terra Egypti, absque Josephi imperio, nemo poterat manum movere, aut pedem. Ad Josephi enim imperium, cunctus populus obedire debebat: ita Patre æterno jubente, in toto orbis ambitu, absque Christi redemptoris imperio, nullus aut angelorum aut hominum, manum movebit aut pedem.”

—Paulus de Palacio.

² “Πάσα ἰξουσία—quam scilicet ab æterno habui, in statu exinanitionis verò ab ea abstinui: nunc autem in statum gloriæ ingressus eam recepi, ut ab æterno Mihi secundum Deitatem competentem, nunc autem secundum humanitatem Mihi in tempore datam.”

—Eras. Schmidt.

being grafted into Him who is Eternal Life; for now *His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*¹

(3) With reference to its exercise—the use to which that power is now put—the sending forth rulers and teachers into His Church and world. Of this He speaks when He declares of every true minister of His Church, that after His ascension *greater works than these which He had done shall he do; because I go unto My Father.* His was now the possession of a new power: new in the rules and commands by which it is regulated; new in the substitution of the Gospel for the Law; new in the character of Divine grace by which access has been opened from the soul to its Father, its Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

The power of Christ's resurrection is evidenced in our holding firmly to the belief that Christ possesses that *all power* which He here claims. And this power it is noteworthy He claimed at the moment when He was sending forth His Apostles, the first ministers of His word, to baptize and to teach all nations. By so doing He assured them at the same time of His power to send them and also to sustain them in their ministerial toils.

All power in heaven and earth. That is, that He who from eternity ruled in heaven should, by the establishment of His Church, henceforth also rule on earth in the hearts of believers. Christ says not in hell, for though there is a power to which even devils are subject despite their will, yet it is a voluntary obedience through the death on the cross which is here spoken of. Again, He says only *in heaven and in earth*, for He is speaking to His Apostles, whom He is sending forth to lead men through this earth to the heaven which He has gone to prepare for them. He speaks, moreover, not of hell, because as He leads us by the bonds of love, so would He have His ministers draw men to Him by the remembrance of His love and by the hope of heaven, rather than by the fear and the terrors of hell.² It

¹ "Resurrectionis Christi fructus est potestas Christo data in cœlo, ut illuc membra Sua e terris trahat, ut ibi sanctos Suos perenni beatitudine, gloria, immortalitate donet, coronet. Resurrectionis Christi fructus est jus congregandi populum quem acquisivit sanguine Suo ex omnibus terræ finibus. Resurrectionis Christi fructus est summum imperium quod exercet in angelos et homines ut caput Ecclesie. Crucis et resurrectionis Christi fructus potestas

omnis Illi data in corda seu voluntates hominum, ut illos victricis gratiæ Suae efficacia convertat, dirigat, trahat, agat quocumque voluerit. Illi potestas data est qui paulo ante crucifixus, qui sepultus in tumulo, qui mortuus jacuerat, qui postea resurrexit. In cœlo autem et in terra potestas data est, ut qui ante regnabat in cœlo per fidem credentium regnet in terris."—*Alex. Natalis.*

² "Solum ait *in cœlo et in terra*, sicut et Paul ad Ephes. i. 22 ait; *Et*

was fitting thus to speak, because it is a certain authority which Christ is here delegating, a *power, which the Lord hath given to His ministers, to edification, and not to destruction*, for to none does He give the power of judging and condemning.¹

2 Cor. xiii.
10.

(19) *Go ye therefore² and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

Therefore because I possess all power—

(1) As to yourselves, show your obedience by obeying My command, and *go on this mission.*

(2) Teach to others the truth, and prepare them to a like obedience to My commands, *teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*

Paulus de
Palacio.

All nations. By this command does Christ show His power over the whole earth. As He was now about to enter heaven, so does He assign *all nations*, the whole earth, to His Apostles: the privilege which the Jews possessed of old is no longer one in any way confined to them; the veil has been rent by the crucifixion of Christ, and the fold is now made one. There is no longer any even apparent acceptation of persons with God. As He died for all, as the fruits of His death availed all men, as He is the Creator and Redeemer of all, so would He have every man brought within His fold. The time pointed out by prophecy had now come, and the Father had made the Son *the head of the heathen*. He was now about to be *sought of them that asked not for Him, and found of them that sought Him not*. He who as *the King of the Jews* had sent His Apostles to *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, now, since by His passion He is ruler over the whole world, sends forth His Apostles to disciple all nations.

Sylveira.

Titelmann.

Maldonatus.
Hugo de S.
Charo.

Lamy.

Ps. xviii. 43.

Isa. lxx. 1.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Go (πορευθέντες)—be ever going forth to bring men to

Ipsum dedit (scilicet Deus Pater) *caput super omnem Ecclesiam*, sive triumphantem in cœlo sive militantem in terra. Christus ergo solum hic facit mentionem in cœlo ac terra, ut homines degentes in terra, magis ad Se traheret cœlesti præmio, quam metu gehennalis pœnæ; magis volens allicere ad Se omnium animos benignitate quam pœna ac rigore."—*Sylveira*.

¹ "Si Dominus dederit tibi potestatem, in ædificationem non in de-

structionem ea utere, ædifica, cave ne destruas, primum enim teipsum destrues."—*Barradius*.

² "Griesbach and Scholz here omit οὐν. It is rendered by Syr. Vulg., but is not read in ten uncial manuscripts (A. E. F. H. K. M. S. and all three of Matthæi's) and numerous cursive copies of both families; so that it would be difficult to defend the particle, even were it worth contending for."—*Scri- vener*.

Christ. It is the work of a good and faithful servant to be always going and never ceasing from the work to which the Judge of all has called him. For by these words does Christ give to His ministers the trumpet of the Gospel, and assign to them the office of preaching His message until His coming again. Here, then, we have not only the encouragement and commission to evangelize the heathen, but also the imperative duty of so doing. It is Christ's command to all who are called to the ministry of His Church.

Sylvester.

Leo.

Stier.

Bengel.
Stier.
Lange.

Th. Aquinas.

The word rendered *teach* in our version, and in the Vulgate by *docete*, is, properly, disciple (*μαθητεύσατε*). Most of the Western commentators read this and the next verse in this way, *Teach all nations* and then *baptize* them, and with this *teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*.¹ In this interpretation the Latin *docete* has evidently influenced more than the Greek *μαθητεύσατε*. Then, since *teach* would in this case be repeated, many make a distinction, as though the first teaching related to dogma and the later to ethics. Whilst, however, the grammatical construction of the sentence is not adverse to the interpretation of some modern commentators, *Make all nations My disciples—first by baptizing them, and then by teaching them to observe all the commandments of God*;² yet since those who were baptized were first instructed in the faith, there must needs be a reference to instruction in the dogmatic facts or truths of Christianity preceding baptism, and to the daily building up of the baptized in the practice of what Christianity enjoins.³

Baptize with no mere outward form of water, but with

¹ "Ex his verbis licet ad literam expressam habeatur; quod Ecclesia per Apostolorum doctrinam præcedentem disponenda, et per baptismum ab Apostolis generanda et per doctrinam post baptismum subsequentem ab eisdem confirmanda debeat merito vocari Apostolica," etc.—*Capponus à Porrecta*.

² "Disciple all nations—make them My disciples. This includes the whole design of Christ's commission. Baptizing and teaching are the two great branches of that general design, and these are to be determined by the circumstances of things which made it necessary in baptizing adult Jews or heathen to teach them before they were baptized; in discipling their children, to baptize them before they were taught; as the Jewish children in all ages were

first circumcised and after taught to do all God had commanded them."—*Wesley*.

³ "*Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes*. Hic injungit officium et triplex injungit officium. Primo docendi; secundo baptizandi; tertio officium informandi quantum ad mores. *Docete* quia hoc est primum in quo debemus instrui, scilicet in fide: quia *sine fine impossibile est placere Deo* [Heb. xi. 6]. Et ex hoc inolevit in Ecclesia quod primo catechizat baptizandos, deinde instruit in fide. Et postquam docti sunt de fide, dat officium baptizandi: *Baptizantes eos*. Sed numquid sufficit ad salutem credere et baptizari? Non; immo etiam requiritur instructio morum ideo dicit: *Docentes servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis*."—*Th. Aquinas*.

the *living water*, with the name of the living God, *the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. Baptize in the *name*, by the power and authority of the ever-blessed Trinity, those who because of such baptism shall be bound to believe the doctrine of the Triune God, and shall be incorporated with God through membership to Christ, who is God. The Christian in his baptism is adopted by the Father, incorporated into the Son, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and consecrated by this adorable mystery to the perpetual service of Almighty God in body and soul, and to a life of manifest conformity to the precepts of the Gospel of Christ.

John iv. 10.
Alex. Nat.

Sa. Ilenard.
Maldonatus.

Stier.

Quesnel.

In the name, not in the names. The use of the singular here points to the unity of substance in the Godhead. There is but one essence, one power or efficacy into which we are baptized, one washing and cleansing from the guilt of sin, though the medium be a twofold one, that of water and the Spirit—one *Lord, one faith, one baptism*.¹ Here, then, we have the assertion of three distinct subsistencies or persons, *the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, which overthrows the scheme of the Sabellians; three who are of coequal power and yet identical in nature, which contradicts the heresy of the Arians.

Dion. Carth.
Ephes. iv. 5.

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

We are, then, here taught:—

(1) That baptism is by God's appointment, and may not be despised unless by those who despise Him.

(2) The word "baptize" involves the element which is to be used, water.

(3) We have the form of words to be used in baptism appointed by Christ Himself, the only instance in which He uses these three words together, *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*.²

Salmeron.

¹ "The 'name' of Almighty God means His attributes and power, that which His name designates, His essential self."—*Pusey on Baptism*, chap. ii.

"*Ovoma*, which is equivalent to *ὄν*, signifies here the very essence of God Himself."—*Olshausen*.

"*In nomine*—nominato et in virtute."—*Dion. Carthusianus*.

² "Baptizamus igitur in nomen Patris, i. e. in professionem et cultum Dei, qui se in V. T. revelavit; in nomen Filii, tanquam veri Messiae, qui in carne humana apparuit, et miraculis, doctrina, resurrectione, ascensione verus Messias demonstratus est; in nomen

Spiritus Sancti, qui donis Suis beneficia spiritualia nobis applicat, vel, ut breviter dicam: baptizamus in *Patrem*, ut novae religionis auctorem; in *Filium*, ut novi coetus dominum; in *Spiritum Sanctum*, ut hujus coetus rectorem ac adiutorem. *Constit. Clem. VII.*, baptismus datur in nomen τοῦ ἀποστείλαντος Πατρὸς, τοῦ ἐλθόντος Χριστοῦ τοῦ μαρτυρήσαντος Παρακλήτου. Inuitur simul Patris, Filii, et Spiritus S. in eadem doctrina consensus. Nempe Christi doctrina non est alia quam Patris; nec ea quae Spiritus S. Apostolos docuit, diversa sunt à Patris et Filii doctrina."—*Rosenmüller Scholia*.

At the first, when this world and all material things were created, we read that God spake and all was done. He said, *Let there be light: and there was light. Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind: . . . and it was so.* But when man was made, we read of the whole three Persons in the ever-blessed Trinity, *Let us make man.* Man, the last and noblest of the creation of God, was proclaimed to be more excellent than the mere material creation of God, by his being the joint workmanship of the ever-blessed Trinity. So is it in the new creation: when the man is to be regenerated and grafted into the family and household of God, then are all three invoked; all three are witnesses; all three are effectual workers in man's adoption and new birth.

Gen. i. 2.

Gen. i. 24.

Paulus de
Palacio.1 Kings vii.
23, 25.

Barradius.

Christ sent forth the Twelve to disciple and baptize all nations. These were typified by the twelve oxen who, before the temple, bore the brazen sea. *Three* of these were directed to be made *looking toward the north, and three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east*—that is, to every quarter of the world. Into every part of the world were these Twelve bidden to go forth, labouring as oxen in the tillage of God's field, and bearing with them the waters of baptism for the cleansing of all nations.

(20) *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*¹

Theophylact.

Sylveira.

Dion. Carth.

After baptism He bids the Apostles train the converts in the observance of all the commandments—not of some one or other only, but of all which He had commanded them. For neither can an historic faith, however accurate, nor baptism save us, unless we keep the whole law of God and observe His precepts. To observe them—

(1) By retaining them in their memory.

(2) By fulfilling them in their lives.

And then, having bidden them observe all these commandments, and having spoken of His departure, lest the

¹ “*Ἀμήν* is cancelled by Griesbach and Lachmann. It is omitted by Chrysostom, Vulg., and all Eng. previous to Auth., which contains the word, as also does Syr., and an immense majority of the manuscripts. Indeed it is found in all except B D (A is doubtful) 1. 22. 33. 102, and three of the least important of Matthæi's. Of the other

authorities, the Coptic, Armenian, and a few Italic documents neglect it. The word might readily have been added by the scribes who prepared the ecclesiastical copies (see Mill *ad loc.*); but no sober critic should reject it on such evidence as has hitherto been alleged.”
—*Scrivener's Notes on St. Matthew.*

thought of the difficulty of the task before them should affright them, Christ here consoles them by the assurance of His abiding presence, and gives them confidence by the declaration that, though removed in bodily presence, He is still ever with them.¹ And that He might fasten this truth upon their minds, He uses the same word, *lo*, by which He was wont to preface some great fact or doctrine: *Lo*, He says, *I am with you*, by your side, never absent from you; *I*, the Man Christ Jesus, with whom you have so long held familiar intercourse; *I*, both in My Divine and sacramental presence; *I*, who have already overcome the world, and foiled Satan, and have destroyed the power of death; *I*, to whom all power has been given, both *in heaven and in earth*, will be present, not only by the Spirit whom I will send, but by Mine own self.

Mariana.

Sylveira.

Jansen Yp.

Ferus.

Alex. Nat.

Christ, then, even when departing in bodily presence from His Church, from which it was expedient that He should go, tells His disciples, and in telling them tells the whole Church, that He is not deserting them, not separating Himself from His members, but that He is, and *always* will be, with them to strengthen them in their struggles against sin in themselves and against tribulation from without, and that He would lead them upwards to that glory into which He entered upon His ascension. *I am with you* (ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι)—*I am*, by an unchanging presence.² He says not, I will be, but I ever *am* with you; not by a visible, but by a spiritual presence, which is not subject to the fluctuations of time.³ *Alway*: when scattered abroad and engaged upon His work in the world. *Alway*: not only, that is, with the Apostles, but with their successors also in the ministry of the Church. For if the promise had been limited to the

John xvi. 7.

Leo.

Luca Brug.

Bengel.

Euthymius.

¹ "Notandum quod præsens ubique divina majestas aliter adest electis suis, aliter adest reprobis. Adest enim reprobis potentia naturæ incompræhensibilis, qua omnia cognoscit novissima et antiqua, intelligit cogitationes à longè et omnes vias singulorum prævidet. Adest electis gratia piæ protectionis, qua illos specialiter per præsentia dona vel flagella quasi filios pater erudit, atque ad possessionem futuræ hæreditatis erudiendo provehit. Adest electis ut scriptum est, *juxta est Dominus his qui tribulatio sunt corde et humiles spiritu salvabit* [Ps. xxxiv. 18], adest reprobis, ut promissum est *Vultus autem Domini super facientes mala, ut perdat de terra*

memoriam eorum [Ps. xxxiv. 16]." — Rabanus Maurus.

² "Ego cui data est omnis potestas in cælo et in terra. Ego cui Pater promisit fore ut *poneret inimicos meos scabellum pedum meorum* [Ps. cix. 1]. Ego, inquam, vos mitto." — Emm. ab Incarnatione.

³ "Εἰμι. Utitur præsenti tempore, ut significet, se, labente hujus sæculi tempore non mutandum, et eundem semper fore, æquè et paratum et potentem suis adesse; se unquam Deum esse, qui semper est et nunquam mutatur, et ne secundum humanam quidem naturam mutandum, quæ jam immortalis sit reddita." — Luca Brugensis.

Whitby. Apostles themselves, it would have been, I am with you all your days, not *unto the end of the world*.

Exod. iii. 12. When Moses was directed to go in unto Pharaoh, and he shrank from undertaking that office, he was strengthened by the declaration which God made to him, *I will be with you*: so now, to strengthen His ministers in their contest with sin and the world, our Lord makes the same promise, and cheers and strengthens them by the assurance that He will be with them *always*. With the preacher of His word, to make that word efficacious; with the faithful minister of His Church as a fellow-worker with him in his toil, and with him to reward him when that toil is over.¹

Salmeron. And if this assurance should strengthen His servants against sin, and encourage them in their resistance to temptation, and cheer them amidst their contests with the world, it also points them to the source of the victory which they obtain, and claims for Him the glory of their successful struggles. He it is, who is with them, who is conqueror in them. Hence in the Apocalyptic vision the saints are represented as casting down their crowns before the throne of the Lamb in acknowledgment that the reward which is given to those who, passing through great tribulation, attain to sanctification, is due to their Lord, who is always with them to strengthen them in their conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil. He it is who fights in His people when they resist temptation. He it is who defends them against the assaults of their spiritual foes. He it is who removes fear from their heart by the assurance of His continued presence. He is thus present:—

Emm. ab
Incarnat.

Bruno
Astensis.

(1) By the indwelling of His spirit in the hearts of the faithful.

(2) By His sacramental presence in the water of baptism, and in the bread and wine of the Eucharist.

(3) By His watchful providence by which He protects us, and by the multiplied gifts of His power and love around us.

Dion. Carth.

Chrysostom.

He will be thus present *unto the end of the world*. Thus when about to leave them—so far as to His bodily presence—to the persecution of the world, He cheers them with the remembrance that the power to persecute and to ensnare is not for ever, that there shall be an *end* to all this. Not that when this state of things, this condition of the world, shall come to an *end*, Christ shall then cease to be with His members.² *Until*, as in so many other places of Holy Scripture,

¹ "Nolite de vestra infirmitate trepidare, sed de mea potestate confidite, qui vos in hoc opere non derelinquam."

—S. Prosper.

² "Τὸ ἕως τὴν μὲν τοῦ ἱεροσολίμου χρόνου προθεσμίαν σημαίνει, οὐκ ἀπὸ

does not mean that what He promises shall continue until then, but shall afterwards not be. When *the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool*, it is not meant that then He is no longer to be seated there. We know that Christ shall always be present with His people, for when removed from this world, the Apostle tells us, *we shall ever be with the Lord*. So that He who is now with us to sustain us in our Christian course, will then be with us to crown our labours and to reward our resistance to sin—will be still our *Emmanuel*, ever *God with us* in earth and in heaven.

Maldonatus.

Ps. cx. 1.

Jo. Damasc.
1 Thess. iv.
17.Salmeron.
Isa. vii. 14.
Matt. i. 23.
Paulus de
Palacio.

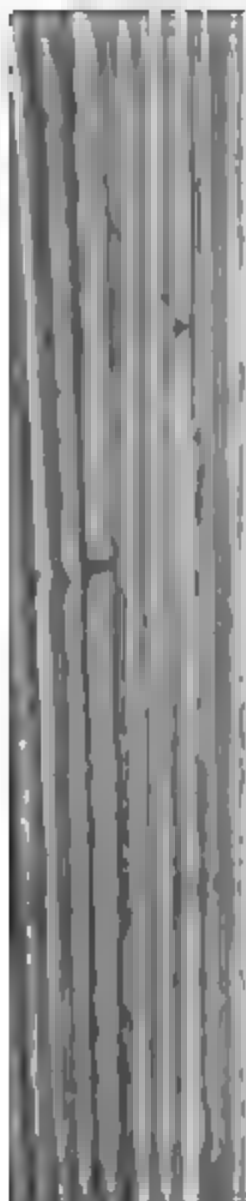
φάσκει δὲ τὸ μετὰ ταῦτα. Φησὶ γὰρ ὁ Κύριος, καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας, ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος· οὐχ ὥς μετὰ τὴν τοῦ αἰῶνος συντέλειαν χωρισθησόμενος.

Φησὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεῖος ἀπόστολος, καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν Κυρίῳ ἐσόμεθα, μετὰ τὴν κοινὴν ἀνάστασιν λέγων." —*Jo. Damascene, De Fide Orthodoxa*, lib. iv. c. xiv.

••• "Det nobis Dominus pro Sua bonitate ut quæ sunt illius cogitemus et agamus, propter illum patiamur, ut ita Dominum nobiscum habere promereamur ad meritum, quod digni per illum reddamur ut ad regnum cœleste

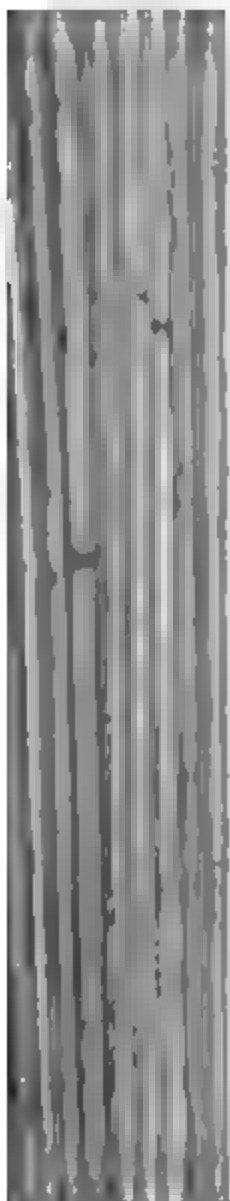
perveniamus, cujus potestatem non solum in terra sed etiam in cœlo Sibi datum asseruit Dominus noster Jesus Christus, qui cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto semper vivit et regnat in secula seculorum. Amen."—*Salmeron*.

LAUS DEO.



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they may well help to give point and fulness to the sermon or catechising. We do not know a more useful present to a young clergyman than these volumes."—*Guardian*.

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ON "THE GOSPELS," VOL. III.

"These three volumes would make a most suitable present to the clergy, and would find a congenial place on the shelves of those who are already possessed of the *Catena Aurea* of Thomas Aquinas."—*English Churchman*.

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ON "THE EPISTLES," VOL. I.

"It is a work of immense labour and research; every paragraph, almost every sentence, refers to some great Christian theologian or father, either quoting his language or embodying his sentiment."—*British Quarterly Review*.

"It is a very noble work; the amount of reading and of sound theology which has gone to its compilation is very large indeed, and in consulting it a clergyman is really getting the pith of the combined judgments of all the best thinkers and writers of the Church, whether ancient or modern. This is a large thing to say, but it is true. And we could wish no better training for a young clergyman than for him to spend at least one day in each week over Mr. Denton's Commentary on the Epistle for the coming Sunday. . . . It is well arranged and readable to a degree which, perhaps, is hardly to be appreciated, unless by those who have had to try their own hands at the difficult work of compiling a running commentary, which shall be at once thorough in its grasp and yet popular in expression; and which, while holding to one clear line of exposition, shall also contrive to present the views of the greatest expositors of various ages. We have examined very carefully Mr. Denton's treatment of several of the most difficult passages of the Epistles, and we are bound to say that our appreciation of his work has risen with each successive reading."—*Literary Churchman*.

"Mr. Denton has produced a Commentary of which the freshness is equalled by the completeness. It will be invaluable to the clergy of the day, in enabling them to bring the results of mediæval thought into combination with those of modern thought, and to make their sermons speak that language of the Church which has ever been the same from the beginning, though the idioms may have varied a little as the centuries rolled by. No parochial clergyman's library is what it ought to be unless it comprehends a copy of this Commentary on the Epistles."—*John Bull*.

"No school has been overlooked, none has been given undue prominence, and the result of the union of all is a catholic Commentary in the best sense, that in which, while no deviation from the fixed standards of the Faith is permitted, minds of all types are invited to cast their contributions into the treasury."—*Church Times*.

"Mr. Denton has produced a work to which the parish priest can turn without any sense of humiliation, and yet with a well-grounded confidence that he will be sure to obtain valuable help. . . . We commend it heartily to the laity as a suitable present to the clergy, and to the clergy as a necessary part of their theological library."—*Church Review*.

ON "THE EPISTLES," VOL. II.

"It is needless for us now to repeat what we have already said in commendation of this very well-conceived and admirably-executed undertaking, which has been carried out to the end with the same care and the same profuseness of resources which its author manifested at the beginning. The five volumes furnish a perfect magazine of materials

for the homiletical and expository treatment of the choice portions of Scripture, specially commended to our meditation by the Church on her Fasts and Festivals. No more acceptable or useful addition to a young clergyman's library could be made than that of Mr. Denton's Commentary."—*Guardian*.

"For theological perception, fulness of knowledge, thoroughness of exposition, and soundness of teaching, we have seen few books to equal it. And for sermon-materials for young clergymen it is admirable."—*Literary Churchman*.

"This series of Commentaries, which has been one of the most valuable aids to the parochial clergy in their preparations for the pulpit which this generation has seen, is now at length completed. The present volume, which concludes the Epistles, is not inferior in research, in variety, or in intellectual power to the first one. In fact, it displays even more industry. . . . On the whole, the five volumes Mr Denton has given to the Church are a noble gift, and the unflagging zeal, energy, and patience which he has devoted to the task have been repaid by the value, the usefulness, the orthodoxy, and the learning of the work which he has at length accomplished. His Commentary is one which is in itself a library."—*John Bull*.

"The book now lying before us comes as a most seasonable help to the clergy, especially all such as have not very large and varied libraries. The former work of Mr. Denton on the Gospels, and the earlier instalment of this one on the Epistles, are in so many hands, and are of such tried ability, that a very long or detailed notice is unnecessary in now drawing the attention of our readers to the completion of the whole undertaking. We would merely say, on the one hand, that as large a variety of authors has been laid under contribution as in the former volume, from early Fathers to yet living preachers; and, on the other, that the compactness with which the extracts are given allows no excuse to clergymen for scamped and worthless composition. There are here materials in abundance. . . Not many clergymen have Mr. Denton's range of study, but all, or nearly all, can avail themselves of the materials he has heaped up, and now poured out at their feet."—*Church Times*.

"There are few writers to whom the clergy in their preparation for sermons are more indebted than the author of this Commentary. We do not know any other work on the Epistles that covers exactly the same ground as that of Mr. Denton. . . . There is hardly any writer, whether primitive, mediæval, or modern, whom Mr. Denton has not pressed into his service. . . . A most admirable work, one which we cordially recommend to all students of theology, and to those who have to prepare homilies for the pulpit. It is a boon which we heartily wish may always find a place on the list of books recommended by bishops' chaplains to candidates for holy orders."—*Church Review*.

ON "THE ACTS."

"This is the first instalment of what, when complete, must prove a most valuable work. The amount of learning which Mr. Denton brings to bear by way of illustration and elucidation is amazing,—real solid learning and extensive reading, and not merely that show of learning which is sometimes made by references and second-hand quotations. And then, in addition to this, we must add that Mr. Denton is not by any means the victim of mere learning. His discrimination, his full recognition of the difficulties which have to be met, and the fairness with which he meets them, all have to be acknowledged with grateful approbation. . . . We should be specially glad to find certain selected portions of this Commentary and its Introduction required to be 'got up' by candidates for Ordination. . . . We strongly commend this work to all Biblical students, and to all examining chaplains."—*Literary Churchman*.

"Mr. Denton, while in the course of his exegetic labours, becoming imbued with the learning and practised in the literary acumen of the great theologians of the past, has caught from them another quality also, and emulates, or almost emulates, their enormous and remorseless patience, and their unflagging and well-nigh incredible industry. The industry displayed in the volume before us is something marvellous. The wealth of citation, the abundance of illustration, the multitudes of references, will convince any one who reads it, that we are not far wrong in declaring that Mr. Denton in his Commentary closely treads in the steps of his own favourite commentators, Sylveira and Ferus, mighty as they were in their labours. Yet the bringing the reader of to-day into contact

with the accumulated learning, the deep piety, and the spiritual insight of the Middle Ages, is not the only, nor even perhaps the chief, merit of this admirable Commentary. It deals with the objections, the quibbles, and the fallacies of what is (not inappropriately) called 'Modern Thought,' with equal fulness and clearness. But we must refer the reader to the volume itself. In this work we have an explanation of a portion of Holy Scripture, which is characterized alike by sound, learned, critical acumen, and soundness of doctrine."—*John Bull*.

"From a careful and detailed examination of the work, and a comparison of it with the best of its rivals, we have no hesitation in placing it at the head of all such comments, by reason of its fuller completeness, its more extended learning, its ampler minuteness of detail, and more especially for its unrivalled force of argument against the sceptical objectors to the authentic character of this portion of the sacred narrative. This is a comment, not only almost on every word of the inspired narrative, so full and minute is it in detail, but upon every argument used by the ancient or modern unbelievers to impugn the veracity or to question the consistency of the inspired writer. It is, in truth, a very monument of learning, so largely does it store and utilize the treasures of all the best writers on the subject, and will go far to place the author at the head of all learned commentators of the present day."—*English Churchman*.

"A really good and scholarly English Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles has long been a *desideratum*, and Mr. Denton, already favourably known in this branch of Ecclesiastical Literature, has done well to undertake the work. It is a fact, though a difficult one to explain, that this book of Holy Scripture has occupied the attention of comparatively few writers, so that the range of literature over which Mr. Denton was able to travel in search of materials for his work was far more restricted than that which he enjoyed when compiling his Commentary on the Epistles and Gospels in the Prayer Book. Yet, for all that, he gives us a list of almost a hundred and ten authors, whom in one way or another he has laid under contribution. Although the general character and construction of the work before us is, in the main, similar to those in the author's earlier Commentaries, circumstances have compelled him, in the present instance, to assume at times a somewhat controversial tone. Certain modern Biblical critics have, as is well known, endeavoured to throw discredit upon both the authenticity and genuineness of the Acts of the Apostles; it was therefore necessary for Mr. Denton to act as apologist, and the general value of the book is increased thereby. The Introduction, in which Mr. Denton has brought the latest contributions of modern scholarship to bear upon such questions as the date, authorship, early use, chronology, &c., of the Acts of the Apostles, will be found comprehensive and valuable—indeed, we do not know any single book which affords so much trustworthy information on these subjects as is collected here by Mr. Denton, in the hundred and sixteen pages which he devotes to his Introduction."—*Church Times*.

"A much-needed book, treating 'the Acts' from a Church stand-point, full of matter, concise and learned, yet so arranged that it is interesting and useful to the ordinary reader. The Introduction discusses fully the questions of name, date, author, language, ecclesiastical polity, objections, &c. All, except the last, in short Essays. The objections are fully and fairly considered and answered. The Commentary itself is textual after the usual English plan; in the foot-notes are given brief quotations in the originals for the scholar; at the end of some of the chapters are longer notes, as on 'The Sanhedrim,' &c. The explanations are clear and concise, the doctrinal teaching sound, and the practical reflections natural and devout. This first volume contains twelve chapters. We heartily recommend it to both clergy and people."—*American Church Review*.

"It is only strict justice to Mr. Denton to observe, that his work is not only a monument of wide research and marvellous industry, a very treasure-store of rare and precious information, hidden for long centuries in the dusty recesses of patristic and mediæval learning, but a well-arranged, systematic, and orderly digest of all that has been written by the best authorities—Protestant and Romish, Modern and Ancient—on the inspired record of the history of the Christian Church. Mr. Denton's treatment of the grave difficulties in the speech of St. Stephen is, to our mind, one of the most valuable and masterly portions of this great work."—*Evening Standard*.

